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The Week

THE question of peace or war still continued last week to dominate European affairs. While there has been no official statement as yet regarding the demands made by Hitler in his conversations with Sir John Simon and Captain Eden, it is evident that these were so stiff and uncompromising that they have profoundly shocked the British government. There is little doubt that the Germans are demanding economic union with Austria, the addition to Germany of a large part of Czechoslovakia, with 3,000,000 German-speaking inhabitants, an air force as large as that of Great Britain or France, a navy of at least 400,000 tons, and an army large enough to fight Russia. Germany's plans for conscription, upon which she has already decided whether the former Allies like it or not, will give her an army of approximately 800,000 men, about four-fifths as large as Russia's. Hitler has told the British that his air force is already the equal of their own; when the German Embassy in London denied that any such statement has been made, it was promptly compelled to admit that the denial was a lie—an astonishing international incident that would have caused reverberations around the world in times less troubled than these.

THE first result of Hitler's amazing "diplomacy" has apparently been to throw Great Britain into the arms of Soviet Russia, and to reëstablish the old Triple Alliance of these two Powers and France in everything but name. Following Captain Eden's visit to Moscow the announcement was made that Britain and Russia are in complete accord on the general outlines of a wise European policy. They believe that the collective peace system should be strengthened in every possible way, and particularly by concluding the long debated Eastern Locarno. Trial balloons were also sent up regarding a "Far Eastern Locarno" in which the Powers, with the help of the United States, would attempt to keep peace in the Pacific area—a proposal to which the Japanese instantly replied that such a plan is both unnecessary and unwelcome. Meanwhile the Poles continue to give evidence that they are preparing to abandon the sinking German ship. With a new government brought into existence to emphasize the break with the recent past, the Poles are now busily assuring the world that they want only peace with both Germany and Russia, and that they are far from underwriting Hitler's peremptory and extraordinary demands.

AMONG the interesting repercussions of the European crisis is the effect upon Italian-Ethiopian relations. The Ethiopians, for whom the new European development obviously came along in the nick of time, have broken off the negotiations with Italy regarding the boundary disputes and have renewed their demand that the League of Nations should do something about Italy's cold-blooded, merciless assault upon them, an assault obviously undertaken with the tacit approval of France and Great Britain. A good many thousands of the Italian troops who had supposedly embarked for the Ethiopian fron-

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tier have not gone through the Suez Canal and it is suspected that they have been diverted to the Italian colonies in North Africa so that they will not be too far away if they should suddenly be needed for operations against Germany. It is just possible, also, that Mussolini's plans regarding Ethiopia have been checked by a sudden coolness among the British. The infamous bargain by which Great Britain and France agreed to let Italy do as she liked with Ethiopia was made in secrecy by the British government, and without any "preparation" of British public opinion. Signs are accumulating that many British liberals, who frequently condone much in imperial policy to which they would be violently opposed if it took place at home, are finding the Ethiopian mess too nauseating even for their sturdy stomachs. France, too, has during this week received a setback to which Mussolini must have given serious consideration. Belgium has been forced off gold, and has acquired a new government in the process. This event, so long predicted, has naturally given rise to renewed speculation as to whether the other countries in the European gold bloc—France, Switzerland and the Netherlands—will not soon be forced to follow suit.

WHILE President Roosevelt has been enjoying his Caribbean holiday, several outstanding questions have vexed his lieutenants left behind in Washington. The first of these is the future of the N.R.A. After attempting for some weeks to continue his attitude of neutrality and let Congress write its own bill, the President at last gave way and permitted the introduction of an official administration measure that would continue the N.R.A. for two years. Under this plan, Section 7a would remain without important change, codes would be abolished except for interstate industry, the licensing system would be scrapped and price-fixing would be discouraged unless invoked by the President to encourage small businesses. It was explained in Washington that the administration is alarmed regarding the threat of strikes in several important industries, and that it is believed that the N.R.A. in its new form will satisfy labor. It is true that William Green, head of the American Federation of Labor, expressed his approval of the bill, at the same time demanding passage of the thirty-hour week and the Wagner Labor Disputes Bill. While the administration was thus asking a two years' additional lease of life for the institution that is by all odds its worst failure, it revealed the strongest possible fear that the Supreme Court might find the present N.R.A. unconstitutional, by abandoning the Belcher case, which would have provided a test of the legality of the Lumber Code. Angered by this retreat, the Lumber Code Authority is preparing to wind up its affairs; and to cap the climax of absurdity, the government has announced that violations of the N.R.A. will continue to be prosecuted vigorously. A sorrier mess of political hypocrisy it would be hard to imagine.

THE danger of strikes, used as a bogey to frighten Congress into hasty passage of the N.R.A. bill, is a reality. Workers in the cotton-textile industry were outraged when the government recently consented to a 25-percent reduction of output which, of course, means a 25-percent reduction in wages. The railroad brotherhoods, whose wages have just been restored to the former level, believe that the employers are about to demand a new cut, and they have already announced that they will strike rather than accept it. In the rubber industry, centering in Akron, Ohio, preparations are being made for a struggle between employers and employees. While a truce has been patched up between soft-coal miners and mine owners, it extends for a few weeks only, and there is a likelihood of trouble after it expires. In hard coal, there is trouble, rising largely from the effort of the new union, opposed to the United Mine Workers of America, to obtain recognition for itself. The American Federation of Labor has conducted a referendum among workers in the automobile factories in Michigan on the question of a strike, and reports that 30 percent of them are in favor of such action.

ONE result of the European crisis has been to cause earnest discussion in Washington of possible means to keep the United States out of the next war, if, as and when. The Senate Munitions Committee has taken much testimony on this subject and has had a number of proposals under consideration. The general plan is for new legislation providing that as soon as war breaks out, there shall be an immediate embargo on arms and ammunition to all belligerents, a similar embargo on public and private loans and a refusal of passports to Americans wishing to travel in zones of danger. It is also proposed that American exporters should ship at their own risk all articles declared by belligerents to be contraband—a list that includes practically all exportable goods. One important question is whether it should be left to the President to institute these embargoes, or they should be compulsory as soon as war begins. Those sincerely concerned for peace are on the whole in favor of making such legislation compulsory, on the ground that irresistible pressure would be brought upon a President in case of war not to impose these embargoes, and that we should promptly find ourselves drawn into the conflict whether we wanted it or not.

NEWS dispatches from Washington calmly report that two important factors in the situation are the State and the Navy Departments. The State Department is reluctant to accept such legislation, though not, as might be supposed, upon the ground that cutting off our foreign trade would cause terrific economic dislocations and widespread suffering among American producers of such things as cotton, for instance, of which we normally export 52 percent. This difficulty is a real one, and realistic thinkers who recommend such embargoes do so in

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the belief that any alternative, no matter how serious, is better than going to war. The State Department's attitude, however, seems to be based upon the fact that it is always about thirty years behind the times, is tradition-bound in its thinking, and would rather see us get into war by maintaining precedent than to break a precedent and stay out. As for the Navy Department, it is quite simply and vigorously opposed to the abandonment of our "rights" as a neutral in case of war. While one hears some talk of the desirability of having our munitions plants keep themselves up to date by filling foreign orders, the real reason, we believe, is that the Navy Department is called upon to protect our so-called neutral rights and does not want its own importance minimized. In other words, it is perfectly satisfied to have us get into a war if the alternative policy is one that lessens the importance of the navy. We invite our readers to write their own comments on this attitude.

THE fact that Belgium has at last been forced to desert the gold bloc and devaluate her currency holds both a menace and a promise, but in our opinion the promise is brighter than the menace is black. If, as a result of this added pressure, France and the other members of the bloc are compelled to devaluate, the nations already off gold will lose whatever competitive advantage they have held, and a new deflationary influence will be set in motion, particularly if each strives to keep or gain advantage by unilateral depreciation. But the nations still on gold play such a relatively small part in world trade, and the United States is so little affected by international exchange in any case, that the depressive effect is likely to be less than is feared. On the other hand, no international stabilization of the exchanges is possible so long as the world is split between the gold bloc and the currencies depending on the pound and the dollar. One side or the other had to surrender. If the gold bloc goes, it will become more possible to negotiate an agreement and start afresh. The first requirement for an international currency agreement will have been met. Of course there are others; the way out of confusion will by no means be clear.

NOW and then a reader of The New Republic complains that he finds in our pages more bad news than good. For the benefit of such readers we are glad to report three items in the week's events that come in the second of these categories: the Supreme Court decision ordering a new trial for the Scottsboro defendants, the dropping of the deportation proceedings against John Strachey and the successful outcome of the Newspaper Guild's strike against the Newark, New Jersey, Ledger. Against this list must be set two adverse items: the fact that eight Communists were found guilty in the Sacramento, California, criminal-syndicalism trial, and the Supreme Court decision that Negroes shall be disfranchised in Texas through their exclusion from the Democratic Party primaries, which are the only real elections in that state.

OF ALL these cases the most important, in the long run, is the Sacramento one. The California criminal-syndicalism law is similar to those on the statute books of many other states and to the new laws being passed during the present anti-Red hysteria. These make it a penitentiary offense to belong to a party that advocates violent revolution, no matter how remotely it does so, and regardless of whether or not the individual on trial himself believes in violence or even knows it is advocated by the party. The Sacramento trial was an attempt to put the Communist Party out of business in California, primarily for economic reasons. In that state, Communists have come to the rescue of the itinerant agricultural workers who have been, and are, so cruelly exploited by the ranchers. Communist-led strikes have succeeded in getting better wages and working conditions and this trial was the landowners' response. That the trial was a political one and the decision a political compromise is shown by the fact that only eight of the defendants were found guilty, although the cases of the others were entirely similar.

WHILE few persons can have expected any other decision in the Scottsboro case than the one handed down, the actual news has undoubtedly created a feeling of great relief. It has also set a precedent of the greatest importance for all Negroes throughout the South. The Court ordered new trials on the ground that there were Negroes qualified to serve on a jury, that these were systematically excluded from the panel, and that through the race discrimination thus exhibited, justice was denied. This certainly means that in future it will be necessary to include Negroes in the panel, and if this is done, it will be very difficult to keep them off the jury itself. In the Scottsboro cases themselves, it now becomes necessary to reindict the defendants and start over. We wish we could hope that the state of Alabama would now have the common sense to drop these proceedings which are bringing to that commonwealth ill repute throughout the world, are adding fuel to the fires of racial antagonism and are putting a heavy and needless burden of expense upon the state. It is fairly clear that no matter how many times the cases are tried, the Supreme Court will continue to set aside the verdicts. Unfortunately, there seems no ground for believing that the state authorities will act with any more intelligence in the future than they have in the past.

THERE has been a good deal of rejoicing because the Department of Labor canceled the deportation proceedings against John Strachey, rejoicing that is probably premature to say the least. It is true that the whole proceeding from the beginning was ridiculous and that the Department of Labor offi-

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cials must have realized they were making themselves a laughing stock in yielding to the pressure of William Randolph Hearst, the American Legion and other professional patriots. The real test will come, however, when Strachey applies again for permission to enter the United States. Unless we are greatly mistaken, the plan is to refuse him such permission. In that case, his liberal defenders will have won a battle but lost the war. The tide of intolerance is undoubtedly rising in this country. Those Americans who still cherish a belief in freedom will have to fight desperately and on all fronts if they are not to be muzzled as the inhabitants of so many European countries have been. We hope that if the Strachey case comes up again in the future, it will be fought once more with all possible vigilance as part of the general crusade to keep open the avenues of communication in America.

FROM Burlington, North Carolina, comes news of a case said by those who have studied it closely to bear a striking resemblance to the Mooney case in California. Mooney, it will be remembered, was railroaded to prison on perjured testimony when there was no honest evidence to connect him with the crime with which he was charged. His real sin was that he was an effective labor leader who had been prominent in strikes in the San Francisco area. In the Burlington case, six textile workers have been found guilty of dynamiting the E. M. Holt textile mill. The evidence against them appears to be of the flimsiest sort. They were not arrested by North Carolina police officials, but by a gang of men imported from Pennsylvania, obviously for the purpose of "getting" somebody for the dynamiting of the mill. The defendants were handicaped during the trial by the lack of money, and it is said that an attempt was made to break them by subjecting them to inhuman living conditions in jail before and during their trial.

FOR many years before the beginning of the Roosevelt regime, the Department of Labor had a happy little habit of deporting aliens from the United States to the countries where they happened to have been born, regardless of the fact that they were political enemies of the existing governments of those countries and ran great risk of being put in prison, or even executed, upon arrival. When Mr. Roosevelt took office, and put the liberal Miss Perkins in charge of the Labor Department, we were promised that this sort of thing would now come to an end. Unhappily, it has not. The latest instance that has come to our attention is that of Erich Becker, who has been ordered deported to Germany. The complaint against Becker is that he is an alien and a member of the Communist Party, though he denies the second of these charges. He is, however, an opponent of the Nazi regime, and there is no doubt at all that if he is returned to Germany, the best he can hope is that he will be sent from the steamer to a concentration camp. Becker was arrested because he participated in a delegation of protest against Hitler terrorism that called at the German Consulate in Chicago. He had a personal reason for being interested in this matter, since two of his brothers are now prisoners in German concentration camps. It is interesting to note that the only witnesses against him were an inspector for the Immigration Department and two policemen, one of whom is a self-confessed stool pigeon who showed an extraordinary personal sympathy for Nazi doctrines—extraordinary, that is, in a member of the police force of an American city. We thus have the curious spectacle of Miss Perkins' department using a Nazi sympathizer in the endeavor to send an anti-Nazi, on an unproved charge of communism, back to the clutches of the Hitler regime.

THE power trust, in its desperate nationwide fight against publicly owned electrical plants, has had one chief argument: that the country is already oversupplied with electricity and that the government would be unable to find customers for its new power. This argument was decisively answered a few days ago by the Federal Power Commission, making public the first section of a report by the National Power Survey, ordered by President Roosevelt. The Commission finds that if industry returned to normal, we should in fact be badly undersupplied with power. We need at least 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 additional kilowatts and the Commission recommends the expenditure of $300,000,000 for the construction of new plants. It also declares that existing plants producing about 2,000,000 kilowatts are obsolete and ought to be replaced. An expert economist representing the private interests recently gave similar testimony before the House of Representatives committee considering the Public Utility Act of 1935. Dr. David Friday, appearing for the Committee of Public Utility Executives, testified that "with the return of prosperity, the sales to ultimate consumers of electricity for all uses will increase by at least 40 percent over the peak of 1929 and 50 percent over the level of 1934." Dr. Friday's testimony can hardly have seemed very palatable to the private power interests whom he represented, but the accuracy of his judgment is confirmed by the Federal Power Commission report.

MEANWHILE, and in spite of the adverse decision of Federal Judge Grubb forbidding the sale of power from Muscle Shoals in Alabama, plans for the use of this power go steadily forward. Chattanooga, Tennessee, recently voted in favor of T.V.A. power by two to one. Memphis registered the same opinion by twenty to one. Knoxville, after trying unsuccessfully to buy the private system, is planning to build a competing public system of its own—a procedure that is likely to be followed by Memphis as well. Only one important city that has had a chance to vote on this subject has rejected T.V.A. power—Birmingham, Alabama. The elec-

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tion there, however, was complicated by other issues and also by the fact that the public utilities poured out money in the attempt to influence the results. If the election were repeated tomorrow, there is little doubt that it would go the other way. Judge Grubb and others like him are playing the role of King Canute. It is perfectly clear that the people of the Tennessee Valley are tired of paying exorbitant rates to private interests in order to create exorbitant profits. No court, or series of courts, will be able very long to stem such a tide.

A CURIOUS statement was attributed to Mahatma Gandhi in press dispatches the other day, reporting his comment on a proposed bill authorizing the government to supply contraceptive information—a measure that was defeated. "If the Indian people multiply like rabbits," said the Mahatma, "they will have to die like rabbits. If nature brought about an excessive increase in the population, it is up to nature to solve the problem thereby created." It would be difficult to cram more misinformation into a few words than did Mr. Gandhi—assuming of course, that he is correctly quoted. It is not nature that has brought about the rapid increase in population in India or (until a few years ago) throughout most other parts of the world. In a state of nature, the birth rate will be around forty-four or forty-five per thousand per annum, but the death rate will be so high, through infant mortality, pestilence, famine and war, that the population will increase slowly if at all. Only when science steps in, with sanitation, immunization and medical care of the sick, does the death rate drop and the rapid rise of population begin. If Mahatma Gandhi insists on the "normal" birth rate, let him demand the normal death rate as well. Otherwise his policy, if universally observed, would indeed result in the course of a few generations in "standing room only."

Britain's Alternatives

WHY IS it that war should be spoken of as inevitable when the population of no country wants war? Why should people have to fight if they do not want to? Cannot some policy be devised and adopted now in Europe by which the danger of war may be averted? These are pressing questions, and nowhere more so than in Great Britain, whose emissaries are now touring the troubled capitals to explore the situation and lay the basis for a line of action. Let us therefore examine as coolly and candidly as we may the chief alternatives among which a nation situated like Great Britain at present can chose, and assess the probable results of each.

Ever since the War, Great Britain has been trying to act as intermediary between France and Germany, to encourage a course of conciliation and concession on the part of the victorious Allies. She has been doing this, however, while remaining a member of the League of Nations and of the whole peace system set up by the treaties that ended the War. These treaties, together with the subsequent Locarno and numerous other understandings, were based primarily on the proposition that the status quo was not to be upset by force or by any unilateral action on the part of one nation or a minority group. Any change must be the result of mutual and voluntary consent; aggression would be repelled by the concerted action of all the non-aggressors. In other words, Great Britain has been following the course urged by President Wilson and his followers upon the United States: to underwrite Versailles, to join the League, and, within that system, to work toward an adjustment of international difficulties.

But Great Britain was not able to bring about sufficient alterations in the peace settlement and sufficient international economic coöperation so that the Germans were placated. Eventually the sense of foreign oppression as the result of defeat became one of the major influences that caused the rise of Hitler, with his program of intense nationalism and his declaration that Germany would redress the balance by force if the Allies did not consent to her action. Even since the accession of Hitler to power, however, Britain has kept on trying to find a way, both to stand by the League and the Treaty by coöperating with France and her former Allies, and to lead Germany back, some way or other, into the world system.

One possible course is to continue this policy, in spite of the obviously growing threat of Hitler's rearmament. British statesmen can refuse definitely to join France or Russia in military pacts, can leave it uncertain what action they would take if war should break out, and can go on trying to persuade Germany to be moderate and France to make concessions. They can do this in the hope that time will somehow change the scene, that something or other will turn up so that a final crisis in which a choice must be made will not arise, or even that if war does occur, Great Britain can remain neutral. But this policy would be extremely vague, and the hope on which it would be based is admittedly slim. Nobody expects that Hitler will be overthrown in the near future, or that the military and industrial forces behind him will lose their power, or that he and they will fail to pursue the ends they have so many times announced. It is contended with great force that this policy will merely give Germany the time she needs to build up her military strength, and will actually encourage her to assume the aggressive in the belief that Britain will stay out. Thus war will be made eventually, and when it comes, the English will be compelled to side with France as they did before, but with far less chance of success than if they had acted promptly and with resolution.

Another possibility is to join France, Russia and Italy in trying to stop Hitler in his tracks. He

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could be offered finally the chance to rejoin the League and sign a system of non-aggression pacts on every frontier. If he refused, as he probably would, a joint ultimatum could be issued to the effect that an army, a navy and an air force of a certain size is all that the other nations will permit Germany to have, and that no territorial or other concessions could be made except such as might be arrived at through the League machinery. And of course that means virtually no concessions. Some predict that if this line were taken, Hitler would back down, and that if he did surrender, his prestige in Germany would be so completely broken that war would be stopped before it had a chance to start.

But, in our opinion, this hope is just as slim as the other. Hitler easily might, and probably would, decline to accept the ultimatum. The only thing left to Germany's opponents, if they wished to enforce their will, would be to proceed with the sanctions set forth in the League Covenant, or to do the same thing outside the machinery of the League. There would be no way to stop German rearmament except by declaring an economic boycott, and employing military and naval action. Defenders of the League used to say that international compulsion of this kind, exercised in support of international law, would not be war but the use of police force. We do not think that the change of words would alter the fact. The victims of machine guns or poison gas would hardly be able to tell the difference.

Only one other course remains. That is to join the other nations in expressing disapprobation, but not to do anything about it until Germany actively assumed the aggressive by invading somebody's territory. In effect, this is almost indistinguishable from the first. The only difference is that it would leave no doubt as to where Great Britain would stand when war did break out. In the meantime it could not help but give Hitler more time to prepare.

The fact that these main lines of action comprise the only practical alternatives at the moment is what makes students of the situation believe that war is inevitable sooner or later. What really makes it so? The easy answer is that Hitler is responsible. But is not Germany responsible for Hitler? And who is responsible for the desperation in Germany that led so many of her people to choose national ends that cannot be validated except by war, and to build up the instruments of war as a means of achieving those ends? It all goes back, does it not, to the political and economic system that brings nations into conflict, that makes governments compete for territory and resources and trade routes? Few doubt that human beings in Europe could live in peace and prosperity if they could learn to produce and exchange for the common good of all, if they could only be so organized that they could practise the coöperation that is necessary for the common welfare. But capitalistic nationalism obstructs these ends at every point. If war comes again in Europe, it will be the crowning demonstration of the ruin of capitalism, a ruin finally precipitated by the absurd and logical extreme of capitalism, which is fascism.

The Herndon Case

FEW CASES in American jurisprudence have been of greater importance than the appeal of Angelo Herndon from the ruling of the Supreme Court of Georgia, which is to be argued before the United States Supreme Court on April 12. The Herndon case, merely because of the injustice done to the defendant in a prejudiced and hostile community, would be of great significance. Coming at this time, however, when a flood of anti-radical legislation is pouring across the country, it assumes extraordinary import. The ruling of the Supreme Court will affect more than the fate of an individual. A principle is also on trial: the principle of civil liberty.

The facts in the Herndon case, briefly, are these. On July 11, 1932, when Herndon went to the federal post office in Atlanta to get his mail from a box, he was arrested. No warrant had been issued for his arrest and, when explanations were required, it was stated that the arrest had been ordered because someone had received a "scurrilous" letter bearing the number of the box that corresponded to the number on the key in Herndon's possession. This letter, it may be noted, was never made part of the trial proceedings and its contents were never made public. No charge of any kind was made against Herndon until eleven days after his arrest. Then, after a writ of habeas corpus was filed, he was indicted for attempting to incite insurrection in the state of Georgia in violation of Section fifty-six of the Georgia Penal Code.

The history of this piece of legislation can only be understood in the light of the history of Georgia and other Southern states. It was passed in 1866, to deal with the dangers arising from the Civil War and carpetbag occupation, but laws similar to it, directed against real or imaginary activities designed to cause rebellion among the slaves, were passed as early as 1804. These laws made any incitement to the insurrection of slaves a felony punishable by death. The penalty for either the delivery or publication of "incendiary" speeches was banishment.

The evidence introduced against Herndon at the original trial consisted of some verbal testimony and, far more important, various books and pamphlets which stated the position of the Communist Party on certain questions. Some of this material was found on Herndon at the time of his arrest. A search of his living quarters, conducted without a warrant, produced the rest. Among the documents were "The Communist Position on the Negro Question," "An Appeal to Southern Young Work-

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ers," "Party Organizer" and "Christianity and Communism." None of these documents, whatever else they contained, advocated forcible resistance to the authority of the state.

The testimony of the state's witnesses sought to establish the fact that Herndon had come to Atlanta to act as a Communist organizer, that he had held two or three meetings, and that he was the author of certain pamphlets which the lower court, during the trial, characterized as "more or less harmless."

On the basis of this evidence, and the books and pamphlets already mentioned, Herndon was found guilty of attempting to incite insurrection, and sentenced, on a recommendation of mercy by the jury, to from eighteen to twenty years in the penitentiary. Herndon, however, suggested to the court the real reason for his arrest and trial; his participation in a relief demonstration held in the middle of June, 1932, in Atlanta. This demonstration, organized by the Unemployed Council of Atlanta, was called after the County Commissioners issued a statement that no person was starving in Atlanta. The Commissioners, although they had previously declared there were no funds available for relief, voted $6,000 for such relief the day after the demonstration.

It is important to note that the trial court, at the conclusion of the evidence, charged the jury, in part, as follows:

> . . . Advocacy, however reprehensible morally, is not sufficient to convict the defendant where there is no evidence to indicate the advocacy would be acted upon immediately. In order to convict the defendant, gentlemen, it must clearly appear by the evidence that immediate serious violence against the state of Georgia was to be expected or advocated.

The evidence was clearly insufficient to sustain a verdict under this construction of the statute; no testimony connected Herndon with any insurrectionary activity, and it is difficult to conceive of a "Red uprising" conducted by the twenty-three Georgians who voted for the Communist candidate for President in 1932. But on appeal the Georgia Supreme Court disregarded the lower court's interpretation and held in effect that any advocacy of sweeping change was criminal, whether or not it was accompanied by incitement to violent opposition against the existing government. So long as the defendant contemplated violence at some undefined and distant future time, the conviction might stand. And, by way of satisfying itself that Herndon did advocate violence, the court observed, in substance, that anyone who proposed equality and independence for the Negro in the South must know that his program would be violently resisted.

The case illustrates, not only what happens when the passions and prejudices of a community are aroused, but the danger of legislation directed against radical activities. The verdict in the Herndon case denies, besides the constitutional rights of freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, the right merely to have in one's possession any material that may be construed by a jury as being of an "inflammatory" or "incendiary" nature. If the verdict is upheld by the Supreme Court, a heavy blow will have been struck at civil liberties. It will establish the principle that *all* radical activity, whatever its complexion, and whether violence is advocated or not, is illegal and punishable by imprisonment. It will also establish the principle that the ownership of any book, pamphlet or any other printed material that advocates social change is proof of one's determination to overthrow the government and can subject one, therefore, to any punishment decreed. It will, in short, block every avenue by which we may hope to reach a better and fuller life, and reduce our status as free and independent Americans to a point somewhere near absolute zero.

If, on the other hand, the Court reverses the verdict, an equally devastating blow will have been struck at the forces of reaction. While the Georgia statute under which Herndon was convicted is not identical with the anti-Red bills that have been passed or are now pending in various states, a precedent will have been established that will be of tremendous aid in the fight against them. It is appropriate to quote, in this connection, part of the opinion handed down by Mr. Justice Brandeis, concurred in by Mr. Justice Holmes, in the case of Whitney v. California:

> Those who won our independence by revolution were not cowards. They did not fear political change. They did not exalt order at the cost of liberty. To courageous, self-reliant men, with confidence in the power of free and fearless reasoning applied through the processes of popular government, no danger flowing from speech can be deemed clear or present . . . If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehood and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence . . . Such must be the rule if authority is to be reconciled with freedom. Such in my opinion, is the command of the Constitution.

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Caldwell: Maker of Grotesques

ERSKINE CALDWELL'S most revealing work is a "sport." I refer to the last story in "American Earth," "The Sacrilege of Alan Kent." It is divided into three sections, with wholly non-Caldwellian titles, "Tracing Life with a Finger," "Inspiration for Greatness," and "Hours Before Eternity." In these words we catch a tonality of brooding which, though so much a part of America as to have been pronounced by Poe, is more generally associated with the pious satanists who developed the ways of Poe in Europe: Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Lautréamont, and the early Gide. This work is as unique to Caldwell in manner as it is in mood. Whereas his other stories, long or short, are written with the continuity of the undulations along a moving caterpillar's back, "The Sacrilege" is a chain of brief numbered paragraphs, each bluntly set off from the rest. Done with the solemnity of a farewell or a testament, they contain a kind of aphoristic rhetoric, except that the aphorisms are less ideas than tiny plots. We note here a formal resonance, a stentorian quality, obtained by a swift recital of plagues, monstrosities, horrors, obsessions, disasters and gigantesque imaginings, set against a tender counter-theme: "I never heard a girl whose face and body and eyes were lovely say anything but lovely words." Here we have the symbol of the wanderer, driven by unnamed sins and called by vague visions of a homecoming in female sweetness. The swift segments shunt us back and forth between brutality and wistfulness. Perhaps the grandiose, the violent, and the gentle qualities of the piece are all fused in this bit of purest poetry: "Once the sun was so hot a bird came down and walked beside me in my shadow." A section in "Pagany" containing this item was the first thing by Caldwell I ever saw. For days I was noisy in my enthusiasm—but I could not understand how it went with some of his other work.

Now that we have five books to examine, the connections are more easily discernible. It seems to me that Caldwell has elsewhere retained the same balked religiosity as distinguishes "The Sacrilege," but has merely poured it into less formidable molds. We may detect it, transformed, as the incentive leading him to blaspheme and profane for our enjoyment. We may glimpse this balked religiosity in the symbolic transgressions and death penalties that give shape to the plots of "Tobacco Road" and "God's Little Acre." It is the explicit subject matter of much conversation in all his novels. It is revealed by an almost primitive concern with sexual taboos, and with fertility rites rising in opposition to the theme of castration. In its temperate, more social aspects, it shows as a tendency to deny humans their humaneness, as though the author, secretly abased, wanted to "drag others down" with him. Entertainingly, it appears in still more attenuated form as caricature and humor, the mental state of "refusal" here inducing extravagant incongruities that sometimes can be received with laughter, but are frequently so closely connected with degradation and acute suffering that the effect is wholly grim. Towards the end of his longer works, the goad of balked religiosity provokes grandiloquent moralistic passages wherein his subnormal mannikins, strangely elated by the story's symbolism, transcend themselves and speak of vital purpose with almost evangelical fervor (plus a slight suggestion that they had read D. H. Lawrence). And in an unexpected episode of "Journeyman," his latest book, Caldwell has even gone so far as to introduce a quality of other-worldliness into the very midst of his human rabbit hutch—for in no other way can I interpret the section (which Horace Gregory has selected for approval) where three men take turns at peering out through a crack in the wall of the barn, while one sermonizes: "It's sitting there and looking through the crack at the trees all day long that sort of gets me. I don't know what it is, and it might not be nothing at all when you figure it out. But it's not the knowing about it, anyway—it's just sitting there and looking through it that sort of makes me feel like heaven can't be so doggone far away."

In taking balked religiosity as the underlying theme upon which his successive works are the variations, I do not want to imply that Caldwell, like Hemingway, is preparing himself for a return to Rome. His recent powerful story in Scribner's, "Kneel to the Rising Sun," indicates that he can make the change from negativism to affirmation by choices usually called secular. In so far as he is moved by the need of salvation, he seems minded to find it in the alignments of political exhortation, by striving mainly to see that we and he take the right side on matters of social justice. But as partial vindication of my proposal that his cult of incongruity seems to stem from the same source as his social propaganda, I should note that, precisely in this story of a lynching, his emphasis upon the playful scrambling of the old proprieties abates: instead of the humorist's refusal, as shown in his earlier zest to garble the conventions, we get a sober assertion of positive values. He does not merely act to outrage an old perspective by throwing its orders of right and wrong into disarray: he subscribes to an alternative perspective, with positive rights and wrongs of its own, and with definite indications as to what form he wants our sympathies and antagonisms to take. Incidentally, this development suggests the ways in which a motivation essen-

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tially non-political or non-economic can be harnessed in the service of political or economic criticism.

Whether one so apt at entertaining us by *muddling* our judgments will be equally fertile in *stabilizing* judgments remains to be seen. My guess would be that he won't, since he would have to master a whole new technique of expression. His very abilities tend to work against him. Recently I heard one man complain that Caldwell "has yet to learn that the revolution begins above the belt." And I incline to suspect that, in the learning, he may begin to find himself psychologically unemployed. A literary method is tyrannical—it is a writer's leopard-spots—it molds what a writer can say by determining what he can see; hence I should imagine that Caldwell would have to develop by satirizing more complex people rather than by pleading unmistakably for simple ones. But that is a guess about tomorrow's weather.

When I say that Caldwell's particular aptitude has been in scrambling or garbling proprieties, I refer to his deft way of putting the wrong things together. An unendowed writer, for instance, might strain to engross us by lurid description of the sexual act—and the result would be negligible. But such an uninventive writer would probably be quite "proper" in the sense that he accepted the usual conventions as to the privacy of this act. Caldwell can be much more stimulating by merely so altering the customary situation that people are looking on and commenting in the blandest fashion, as in the comically inappropriate episode of this nature in "God's Little Acre." Or he may have Ty Ty say, without confusion, such things to his daughters and daughter-in-law as would "properly" be said only under the greatest of morbid intensity. By an astounding trick of oversimplification, Caldwell puts people into complex social situations while making them act with the scant, crude tropisms of an insect —and the result is cunning, where Lawrence, by a variant of the same pattern, is as unwieldy as an elephant in his use of vulgar words for romantic love-making. Probably only in the orgy at the end of "Journeyman" does Caldwell become so undiplomatic in his treatment. Here, with almost the literalness of an inventory, he has us observe in each member of the congregation that phenomenon which so mortified Saint John of the Cross, the fact that, since the body has less channels of expression than the mind, acute religious ecstasy may be paralleled neurologically by sexual orgasm.

In the psychology textbooks, we read accounts of experiments whereby the higher centers of an animal's brain are removed, with the result that the animal's responses to stimuli are greatly simplified. A frog, so decerebrated, may jump when prodded, eat when fed, and croak when caressed—but it is evident that with the operation the poor fellow's personality has vanished. He has become less like a living organism, and more like a doorbell, which rings when you press the button. He has lost the part of himself that is sometimes called free will and which Bergson names the "center of indetermination." And his ways, as compared with the ways of a whole frog, are distinctly grotesque. Caldwell often seems to have performed such an operation upon the minds of his characters. As Ty Ty Walden complains in "God's Little Acre," "There was a mean trick played on us somewhere. God put us in the body of animals and tried to make us act like people." It is a just complaint of Ty Ty's, as the creature of his own private creator. What the decerebrated frog is to the whole frog, Caldwell's characters are to real people. In view of which, it is positively incredible that his extravaganzas, imagined in a world essentially as fantastic as Swift's, should ever have passed for realism.

Pearl, the image of better things in "Tobacco Road," does not even *speak*. Anderson's gropers stuttered, but in this book the golden-haired child-wife who is charged with the novelistic duty of upholding a little corner of glory in the midst of degradation, is totally inarticulate. For her there is no such verbal key as that with which the great sonneteer unlocked his heart. Though married, she sleeps alone; she will not look at her uncouth husband; she refuses to discuss his appetites with him (she cries when he beats her, but "Lov did not consider that as conversation"); and in the end, still wordless, she vanishes, doubtless to become a prostitute in Augusta. Silk stockings in the city, we feel, is her noblest conceivable utopian negation of the physical and spiritual impoverishment all about her; but to her understanding of this little, she will bring a deep, innate delicacy, invisible to all but the novelist and his readers.

In this discussion of Pearl, I may seem to have involved myself in a contradiction. For I speak of Caldwell's subhuman characters, yet I credit them with great delicacy. Here we come to the subtlest feature of Caldwell's method. Where the author leaves out so much, the reader begins making up the difference for himself. Precisely by omitting humaneness where humaneness is most called for, he may stimulate the reader to supply it. When the starved grandmother in "Tobacco Road" lies dying, with her face ground into the soil, and no one shows even an onlooker's interest in her wretchedness, we are prodded to anguish. When these automata show some bare inkling of sociality, it may seem like a flash of ultimate wisdom. I suspect that, in putting the responsibility upon his readers, he is taking more out of the community pile than he puts in. Perhaps he is using up what we already had, rather than adding to our store. He has evoked in us a quality, but he has not materialized it with sufficient quantity. In any event, the silence of Pearl in "Tobacco Road" and the sober burlesque of the men peering through the crack in "Journeyman" are of a piece with the strange albino of "God's Little Acre," the "conjur" who makes the simple, lyrical declaration to Darling Jill (herself graced with one of the loveliest names in all fiction):

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> "I wish I had married you," he said, his hands trembling beside her. "I didn't know there was a girl so beautiful anywhere in the country. You're the prettiest girl I've ever seen. You're so soft, and you talk like bird-song, and you smell so good. . . . "

I have denied that Caldwell is a realist. In his tomfoolery he comes closer to the Dadaists; when his grotesqueness is serious, he is a Superrealist. We might compromise by calling him over all a Symbolist (if by a Symbolist we mean a writer whose work serves most readily as case history for the psychologist and whose plots are more intelligible when interpreted as dreams). In The Saturday Review of Literature a few months back, Dr. Lawrence S. Kubie took as particularly significant the absence of the motherly woman in Caldwell's fictions, with attendant cult of sterility. And his article gave many relevant clues as to the *nonrational* linkages involved in the imagery of "God's Little Acre."

In books of complex realistic texture, such as the great social novels of the nineteenth century, we may feel justified in considering the psychologist's comments as an intrusion when he would have us find there merely a sublimation of a few rudimentary impulses. The important thing is not the base, but the superstructure. With fantastic simplifications of the Caldwell sort, however, the symbolic approach has more relevance. Thus, the selection of extreme starvation as a theme for "Tobacco Road" is found to take on a significance besides that of realistic justification when we link it with passages in "God's Little Acre" where Ty Ty, admiring Griselda, declares that the sight of her "rising beauties" makes him feel inspired to "get down and lick something." How possibly explain as mere reporting the episode in "God's Little Acre" about the girls who have replaced the men in the factory, and of whom we read the dreamlike statement, "When they reached the street, they ran back to the ivy-colored wall and pressed their bodies against it and touched it with their lips. The men who had been standing idly before it all day long came and dragged them home and beat them unmercifully for their infidelity"? A factory that could induce such surprising antics must have peculiar connotations not realistically there. And perhaps we come closer to them when recalling how, in this same factory, where the rebellion of the workers takes very unreal forms, Will finally fulfills his determination to "turn on the power," but only after his perverted rape of Griselda. When the old grandmother dies, the sight of her face in the dirt simply reminds her son Jeeter that the soil is right for planting. Immediately after, he is destroyed by fire.

The symbolic relations submerged here begin to suggest themselves when we recall the following facts: In both "Tobacco Road" and "God's Little Acre" we are told that there are two types of people, those who stay on the farm and those who go to the factory. Both Jeeter of "Tobacco Road" and Ty Ty of "God's Little Acre" are the kind that stay on the farm, the first hoping to plant again (a frustrated hope) and the second digging in the bowels of the earth for gold (an exceptional obsession to motivate an entire book about contemporary Georgia, though we may legitimately remember here the golden-haired Pearl of "Tobacco Road"). In one of the short stories, "Crown Fire," we learn from the course of the plot that the fire symbol is linked with partial female acquiescence; and in "The Sacrilege," where the "offense" is unnamed, we are told, "My mother saw from her bed the reflection in the sky of red wind-fanned flames. She carried me out into the street and we sat in the red mud shivering and crying"—sitting in this same soil with which Jeeter is so impotently preoccupied (since he cannot buy the seed for planting) and which Ty Ty turns into sterility by digging there for gold. After Will carries out in actuality the perverse inclination Ty Ty speaks of, Will can "turn on the power" in the factory. But though Will here seems to deputize for Ty Ty, Ty Ty's son commits a murder and must run away. Ty Ty moans that blood has been spilled upon his land, whereupon he is freed of his obsession to dig gold; and as the son is leaving, Ty Ty wills that God's little acre be always under him. Both books are thus permeated with symbolic sins, symbolic punishments, followed by symbolic purification. At the end of each, and following the orgy in "Journeyman," there is the feeling that a cleansing had taken place, that the character who, at the last transformation, is the bearer of the author's identity, is free to "start anew." All this is magic, not reason; and I think that we are entitled to inspect it for the processes of magic. The balked religiosity of which we spoke is evidently linked with the devious manifestations of "incest-awe"; the plots are subtly guided by the logic of dreams.

I am not by any means satisfied by the psychoanalytic readings of such processes to date, though I do believe that in moralistic fantasies of the Caldwell type, where the dull characters become so strangely inspired at crucial moments, we are present at a poetic law court where judgments are passed upon kinds of transgression inaccessible to jurists, with such odd penalties as no Code Napoleon could ever schematize.

The short stories (republished in "American Earth" and "We Are the Living") as a whole seem too frail. They are hardly more than jottings in a diary, mere *situations* that Caldwell, with his exceptional turn for narrative and his liquid style, manages to palm off as plots. I call them diary jottings because they often give the impression of having suggested themselves to him in this wise: If you were sitting alone in a strange room, you might think, "What if someone knocked at the door?" If Caldwell were similarly placed, such a thought might occur to him, and there he would have his story.

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He has a sharper sense of beginnings than most writers, as witness in the long story, "Journeyman," Semon Dye's formal entrance in the lavishly balky and noisy car. Here is a mock announcement of the hero's approach, done with such a blare and fanfare of brasses as Wagner summons to herald the approach of Siegfried. Thus, the author tends to begin with some oddity of situation, which as likely as not suggested itself without a resolution, so that the story merely fades away rather than closes. He shows a surprisingly naïve delight in all the possible ramifications of the thought that girls may be without panties, and he seems to have searched the length and breadth of the country for new situations whereby some significant part or parts can be exposed for us. The basic formula seems to be the use of two unrelated orders of events until they are felt to be related. He gets very appealing pictures of adolescent love—but his most successful venture in the shorter form is probably "Country Full of Swedes," where a family returns to their house across the road after a couple of years' absence, and their sudden prevalence in the locality is amusingly magnified until, for all their obvious peacefulness, they take on the qualities of a vast invasion.

Caldwell's greatest vice is unquestionably repetitiousness. He seems as contented as a savage to say the same thing again and again. Repetition in his prose is so extreme as almost to perform the function of rhyme in verse. In analyzing the first four chapters of "Tobacco Road," I found that it was simply a continual rearrangement of the same subjects in different sequences: Jeeter wants Lov's turnips, Lov wants Jeeter to make Pearl sleep with him, Jeeter's own turnips all have "damn-blasted green-gutted turnip-worms," hair-lipped Ellie May is sidling up to Lov, Dude won't stop "chunking" a ball against the loose clapboards, Jeeter hopes to sell a load of wood in Augusta—about ten more such details, regiven in changing order, make the content of forty pages. Sometimes when reading Caldwell I feel as though I were playing with my toes.

KENNETH BURKE.

Alms-Giver: Harry L. Hopkins

BETWEEN May, 1933, when he came to Washington, and the present time, Harry L. Hopkins has handed out more than two billions of the government's money. Last winter, during the C.W.A. episode, he managed to shovel out $800,000,000 in three and a half months. As a mass alms-giver, he has eclipsed Haroun al-Raschid, the Roman Emperors, the Medicis. Today he is the main support of 20,000,000 people, almost a sixth of the total population.

As the person who has had to watch most closely the relentless deterioration of American living standards, Hopkins might be expected to belong to the administration's left wing. Conservatives have done their best to label him a radical. On its side, the left wing has tried to claim him for its own. Busy as a nurse at an earthquake, so far Hopkins has committed himself to nothing more extreme than a rosy faith in Mr. Roosevelt.

Hopkins is an administrator. The caste-mark of a top-rank executive is a total-recall memory, and this Hopkins has to an awe-inspiring degree. He can, for instance, give the relief disbursements and number of families on relief in each of the forty-eight states for months back. He can glance at a letter from a Governor and say offhandedly: "We gave him an additional $175,000 last April, and here he has four thousand fewer families and is asking for more money," and his dates and figures always turn out to be right.

Though Hopkins is a friendly person, he is continually concealing boredom. He gets bored by his own formal speeches. When he set up the C.W.A., the biggest, most ticklish experiment the New Deal has attempted, he summoned mayors and state and city relief administrators to a meeting in Washington. His was the speech that was supposed to send everyone away filled with fighting zeal. But halfway through an explanation of the official regulations, you find Hopkins trying to hold his own attention:

"You know, I can hear my voice bouncing back at me like a preacher's. I don't feel that way about this thing. This is a very serious business to me."

Hopkins is skilled in getting people to do things. Instinctively he knows that most people, at any rate, act because of personal bonds, and the relationship between him and the F.E.R.A. executives is like that of Napoleon and his marshals. Only if you are aware of the inter-family ear-biting and nose-twisting of other New Deal agencies can you appreciate Hopkins' gift. To an almost comical degree, his associates all have the same duralumin, stream-lined minds, the same filing-case memories, the same boredom in the presence of the pomposity, repetitiousness and legalistic obscurity of officialdom.

While other New Deal agencies, especially the N.R.A., have ballooned up to an unmanageable size, Hopkins has kept the F.E.R.A. and F.S.R.C. personnel to about five hundred, which is small enough for him to know every stenographer, her boy friend and what they saw at the movies last Friday. He refused to move into Jim Farley's Post Office building because he disliked its marble and bronze impersonality.

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On first glance, Hopkins looks young and delicate, a high, white, bookish forehead, long, narrow, restless eyes, extremely thin, mobile lips. When he speaks, however, he has a trick of twisting his thin lips to the left, and talking out of the side of his mouth, that makes him seem not delicate, but tough. In fact, he is not delicate. He helped pay his way through Grinnell College in Iowa by playing professional baseball in the summers. In Washington, he works twenty hours a day, and when he can, runs off to the Laurel, Maryland, race track. As head of the F.E.R.A., he once addressed a worshiping convention of social workers in Kansas City, and began by complaining about what he had lost on the local ponies. This made a profound impression on the social workers, and is part of the Hopkins legend.

Hopkins is now forty-four. All his adult life he has been a social worker-bureaucrat. He went straight from Grinnell to the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, New York City, one of the biggest, most powerful charitable institutions in the world. He had a World War interlude, when he was director of the Red Cross at New Orleans, and later he became director of the New York State Tuberculosis and Health Association.

In 1931, when Roosevelt was Governor of New York, a number of his advisers, including Nathan Straus, Jr., recommended Hopkins for head of the newly established state relief organization. In 1931, James J. Walker was still mayor of New York City, the extent of the depression was blissfully unrecognized and Hopkins' job was not considered especially important. Hopkins was not a member of the Albany brain trust. But when Roosevelt became President and needed someone for the F.E.R.A., he remembered Hopkins, and sent for him. Hopkins came to Washington, was uproariously received by the administration's left wing and within three months was a national figure.

By the time Hopkins reached Washington, most of the fundamental questions between right and left—whether the government would permanently assume the functions of investment banking, for example, or take over the railroads—had been decided, and decided in favor of the right. The left's one victory had been the decision to embark on government spending. Congress handed over four billion dollars to Secretary Ickes, and to its horror the left discovered Ickes couldn't spend any public money without an acute personal soul crisis and what amounted to a Grand Jury investigation. Hopkins became the left's chief hope.

The C.W.A., Hopkins' first big undertaking, followed Ickes' conspicuous failure to get P.W.A. money into circulation. In the autumn of 1933, after General Johnson and his Blue Eagle had done their part, business began rapidly to decline. On a train coming back from a social workers' meeting, Hopkins and his assistant, Aubrey Williams, discussed with apprehension the coming winter. They knew they were to be asked to take some of the P.W.A.'s money. Hopkins said: "Let's take a real crack at this. Let's give everyone a job." The title, the Civil Works Administration, was contributed by Jacob Baker.

A little more than three weeks later, they had put everyone to work. The C.W.A. was announced on November 15. On December 1, 2,000,000 people had jobs; on December 15, 4,000,000. Hopkins, who was already the greatest alms-giver, became the greatest employer. As remedies for economic depressions, the dole and public works are very old; they were used in Rome and may have been the reason for the Pyramids. But as far as this correspondent knows, the C.W.A. was a novelty in political economy.

The C.W.A. was set up with complete disregard for social-work principles, which delighted Hopkins. No one was cross-examined about suspected savings accounts, insurance policies or solvent relatives. You just said: "Here, I can do so-and-so," and in theory you got a job, although there were delays and disappointments. It is a fact that the business curve ceased sliding downwards in December, and climbed steadily until the following spring. The greatest single factor in this reversal was Hopkins' act of flinging $800,000,000 (a billion including local money) into the economic system in less than twelve weeks. Hopkins' assistants insist that if the C.W.A. had been continued for another four, or perhaps eight, weeks, the depression would have been over. They may be right; no real proof or disproof is possible.

The C.W.A. terrified business men as well as many New Dealers. To them, the four million C.W.A. workers were an incipient Prætorian Guard that would end by taking the administration captive. Hopkins had ignored his social workers in establishing the C.W.A., but it was they who enabled him to stop it. The F.E.R.A. staffs were set to making investigations and recommending those who should be discharged first. Overnight, the C.W.A. was transformed from a thundering political buffalo herd, with voting strength enough to trample down all opposition, into four million desperately scrambling individuals, each seeking to convince an efficient, sympathetic woman that he or she should keep his or her job. One of the young F.E.R.A. heads advances this plausible theory: "I found out a sobering thing. With a force of well trained, professional social workers, you could break any revolution that ever existed."

With the end of the C.W.A. and the continued paralysis of Ickes' P.W.A., private business again slumped. J. M. Keynes visited the White House; Mr. Roosevelt was reconvinced of the need of spending, and for a second time the administration's left wing began to lay plans. By the middle of the summer of last year, the left wing had persuaded Hopkins—or thought it had persuaded him—to

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undertake a new, gigantic spending program, this time the production of commodities by the unemployed for their own use.

This was not a wholly new scheme. The previous year, the A.A.A. had been seeking to dispose of its surplus cotton. "You take this cotton," the A.A.A. had said to Hopkins, "and make clothes for your unemployed." Hopkins was more than willing, and within a few weeks he had 50,000 women at work in 1,600 sewings rooms over the country. About the same time, Secretary Wallace had slaughtered his infant pigs and Hopkins had been asked to distribute the meat. Thus plunged into the food business, Hopkins had bought surplus vegetables and fruits and put the unemployed to canning. Item by item, the production-for-use program had widened until, by last summer, Hopkins had 1,200,000 men and women engaged in making all kinds of food, clothing, house furnishings and even new housing for themselves.

The proposal of the left wing, the so-called Ohio Plan, was to put everyone, all the employable unemployed, to work producing for their own use. It would have permitted far greater expenditures, for wages, factory rentals, raw materials and transportation, than were possible with the C.W.A. Like all left-wing programs, it was technically perfect; it would not have interfered with established business and would have avoided all deflationary effects. Unhappily, at about this time Mr. Roosevelt and the New York bankers began the conversations that ultimately led to the Great Reconciliation of October, with its implicit pledge of reduced spending. All chance for the adoption of the Ohio Plan vanished, and Hopkins did a quick flipflop, letting it be known that he had never committed himself to the Ohio Plan. As far as I can learn, this is strictly true; nevertheless, the left wing was deeply disappointed.

Apparently what Hopkins would like to do is to build low-cost housing. Here, again, is a job on which Ickes failed. Though Ickes was given $100,000,000 for housing, until a short time ago he did not even have all of it publicly allotted. With his Dyess project in Arkansas and the Red House project in West Virginia, to date Hopkins has constructed as much housing as Ickes has. Last winter, during the drafting of the Federal Housing Administration bill, it was freely reported that low-cost housing would be divorced from the P.W.A. and given to Hopkins. There is no doubt that Hopkins would have welcomed this. But when administration conservatives and Congress disemboweled the bill, and the original proposal for a great national housing program was eliminated, Hopkins turned quietly back to the F.E.R.A.

Hopkins' devotion to Mr. Roosevelt, as intense as the devotion of his own assistants to him, is not altogether easy to explain. It is impossible to believe that Hopkins is content with the New Deal's progress. As any person at the head of the F.E.R.A. must be, he is continually conscious of the misery and humiliation of the unemployed. Hopkins' own father, an Iowa harness maker, was wiped out in the '93 depression, and for several years the family moved from town to town while the father sought to reëstablish himself. Hopkins was only three years old at the time of the '93 depression, and was not touched acutely, but today in his public statements you find him angrily emphasizing the blamelessness, the worthiness, the respectability of the unemployed.

Hopkins' stock answer to the stock question: "What has the F.E.R.A. done?" is "It has proved that people want work, that they don't want relief." Last spring Hopkins went to Europe; proudly the English government displayed to him the workings of England's unemployment-insurance system, which is considered by many New Dealers, including Mrs. Roosevelt and Secretary Perkins, to be an immense advance in social legislation. Hopkins thought nothing of it. "They ought to give them work," he said.

One tangible thing that strongly binds Hopkins to Roosevelt is Roosevelt's land-utilization program—the prevention of soil erosion, the return of semi-arid regions to grazing, the resettling of stranded farmers on more productive land. Such things have only the faintest connection with national planning; moving a few thousand Dakota farmers will no more bring about a planned economy than brushing your teeth will make you a Dempsey. Nevertheless, the land-utilization program has enabled Hopkins to do many worthwhile things. Five million acres have been, or soon will be, returned to the nation, and Hopkins' F.E.R.A. workers, in coöperation with the C.C.C., have built miles of terraces on sloping fields, dammed hundreds of streams, dug wells, cleaned reservoirs and performed innumerable small national chores.

If Mr. Roosevelt goes through with the tentative plans for spending the $4,880,000,000 appropriated in the work-relief bill, announced before his fishing trip, Hopkins will have the job of his life. He will be in charge of housing operations, and his ambitions in this line are tremendous. As I have said, he is immensely stirred by the possibilities of housing. In a recent press conference, he burst out: "People have got to have decent places to live. As far as I am concerned, the day when they do is coming damn soon."

One reason, entirely legitimate, for Hopkins' allegiance to Roosevelt may be his innocence of practical politics. The closest Hopkins has been to politics is his Republican brother's recent campaign for coroner in the state of Washington. Unlike Richberg, Ickes, Cordell Hull, he has had no experience in leading lonely opposition fights. He is a professional bureaucrat. His whole background inclines him to work within an administration, and to value a politician-chief like Roosevelt who per-

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mits him relative freedom and at the same time supports his actions.

The maintenance of 20,000,000 people at barely more than a subsistence level is, at best, a grim business. But within the limitations he has let be imposed upon him, Hopkins has done his job almost faultlessly. There have been local scandals now and then, as in Massachusetts, California, Georgia, North Dakota and now, most serious of all, in Ohio. Such scandals were doubtless inevitable in the expenditure of billions of dollars under emergency conditions and with local Democratic politicians muscling in everywhere. But these scandals have usually been exposed and ended by Hopkins himself. There has never been any substantiation of the charges made by Senator Borah of practically universal graft.

The one critical political decision that Hopkins has had to make as head of the F.E.R.A. was that about relief for strikers. Part of the credit for his announcement that strikers would be fed must go to Mr. Roosevelt and Secretary Perkins, but part is due Hopkins. Unquestionably his firmness in the face of outraged protests from employers has, on a number of occasions, been of great aid to organized labor. Parenthetically, Hopkins was the only administration member brusquely to challenge General Johnson on "your lousy codes" in the days of the General's glory.

Within the F.E.R.A., Hopkins has watched benevolently the formation of Lodge No. 139 of John Donovan's Federation of Government Employees. In a conference with the Lodge officers, Hopkins once outlined a means for the immediate, informal settlement of all disputes. Suddenly he checked himself. "No," he said, "if we don't leave something for the Lodge to get sore at, you won't get members."

At the moment, Hopkins, Richberg and Henry Morgenthau are the administration members who seem closest to Mr. Roosevelt, the three likeliest candidates for the post of heir-apparent. Hopkins attracts attention and fame effortlessly; whatever he does has brilliance and glitter about it. He will be worth watching for a long time.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

Night in May

This is the zero hour—all troubles and all blurs—
The will is lulled and falters, denied desire stirs.
Here on the spacious dais where I seem to lie in state:
Pineapple-pronged four-poster of a Utica great-great—
Here where the straining ages, the minds that contradict,
Fusing varicolored fires, make no tumult of conflict:
Ripe calf, pale yellow, India thin, rubbed parchment, boards brown, blue—
I lie awake and long for you, and that is all I do.

—Yet I went there once in winter. Like a faded photograph,
The trees were streaked with yellow. The town was cracked in half;
The cops were on the Common; the Reds were in the pen;
The mills in all their squareness were squatting on the men,
To the croaks of death's-head houses in discolored grays and browns.
It was one of those damned squint-windowed grit and brick New England towns.
And I—I saw it plain as brick: how each his path fulfills—
The masters to the churches, the workers to the mills;
The masters to four-poster beds, the workers to the cold.
November sped October—the strike was five weeks old;
I heard the pickets groaning in the dismal misty dawn;
The pickets called me over; the patrolmen moved me on.

I went again in summer—among those enemies:
The trees were dark with August, the moon was in the trees.
We had the house—Oh, whitest skin! dark, proud and smiling eyes—
An Irish queen!—the first right moon I've ever known to rise!—
Full moon—all free and sudden love—so much forgot so fast—
Dark long girl's hair—like boyhood's hopes turned real so late, at last!
We laughed together, dearest tongue, all tangled in the bed—
You asked me what they'd had to eat and mused on all I said.
But when I rapped the attic roof—still fearful for your sin,
You winced lest Mrs. Lipperkins might crisply cry, "Come in!"—
And when I faced the fields again, now cold as autumn grown,
How bright the moon! how moist the grass! but I was *there alone.*
For you were with the masters, and I had claimed the mill—
These tears we weep tonight will dry—these dews the nights distil—
So lock the windows, darling, and drive the last bolt home
And go to sleep and dream of me—the zero hour has come—
The kids and Mrs. Lipperkins will waken with the day.
—And yet you leave them open wide—it's I who go away.

But now we sutlers of the faith make such a shadow bout—
Such slaps and squeals and snarlings as never yet rang out
Since the gray trolls fought the gray trolls for the fattest rind of cheese:
While Mrs. Lipper, safe in church, bedevils you at ease,
Myself and Louis Leftwich, we do little for the mill. . .
This is the zero hour—let the mind sleep with the will:
Lie over, and lie still.

EDMUND WILSON.

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Sleeper to the Sleepy City

A Story

SANDWICHES? Where?

In the bag. The Gladstone. I put them in the last thing.

But whoever heard of eating sandwiches in a Pullman car? You must be dizzy.—Dot just laughed.—Sandwiches, I said. Not me. Why they'll take us for a couple of Bohunks just off the boat.

Well, if you're such a finicky gentleman, we'll wait till they make up the bed and then eat them.

I gave a groan. Dot watching my face from the seat across was having a grand time. This is damn foolishness, I said. Because our money's low you're going to stop eating, is that the idea?

Not at all. You've forgotten the sandwiches.

Oh, a pox on the sandwiches. Come on, Dot, let's mosey out to the diner before they close up.—The Negro in the white coat had come through the car singing out his last call some time back. But I couldn't get Dot to budge.

They soak you too much, she said. Remember, when we came west from Philly? But you don't have to eat the sandwiches if they're poison to you. You go up to the diner and eat by yourself, Ted.

I turned to look outside through the window. It was solid night now and we were going fast through country; there wasn't a thing to see but the light from the sleeper window skimming over the gray gravel bed of the next track. If you looked at the glass, though, it was like watching the whole lighted inside of the car in a mirror. For a time I listened to the wheels clicking over the rail joints and the squeaking that came from the vestibule up front, and looked at Dot in the window glass.

The porter came in and began making up the berths. Dot said she felt tired and would hit the hay at once, but I wasn't sleepy at all, so I walked out through the Pullmans to the club car where half a dozen men sat around in the leather chairs reading and smoking. When I finished my cigar and got back, Dot was asleep. I had some trouble finding the right berth, the car looked that different, just an alleyway between two long stretches of green curtain—but the porter happened to pass through, he glanced at my ticket and led me by the arm a few steps forward. I gave him a tip. Then remembering how Dot'd been bearing down with the economy stuff these last few weeks I thought, another dime shot. She'd said it was chucking money away to take an upper and lower both, just to make sure we'd have a compartment to ourselves, and to satisfy her, before we'd left Detroit, I turned in the upper berth ticket and got the jingle back. As luck would have it the Red Arrow had room to spare on that trip, and nobody took our upper.

It felt fresh and comfortable in the berth, but I was hungry as the deuce. I wondered if Dot had left any of the sandwiches for me. It would be selfish to wake her up—yet if I went to the trouble of dragging out the Gladstone her sleep'd be broken into anyhow. So I shook her a little by the shoulder.—Dot. Listen. Dot. Are you awake? Look, honey, what'd you do with those sandwiches you were telling me about?

Whassa matter?

The sandwiches. Did you eat them all up?

What sandwiches?

You know. The sandwiches you had in the bag. Did you leave me any?

Oh.—She yawned and turned over on her back.—I thought you wouldn't be seen eating sandwiches in a Pullman car. That's only for Bohunks.

Well, I'm that hungry now I could eat a Bohunk in Wanamaker's window.

Serves you right. I oughtn't to give you these, but I'm too chicken-hearted, I couldn't bear to have you chew up a nice handsome Bohunk. Or starve to death beside me.—She reached in under the pillow and brought out a flat wax-paper package and handed it over.

You're the sweetest gal on wheels, I said, kissing her immoderately.

Don't kiss me so loud. You'll wake up the whole train.

I sat up and unwrapped the sandwiches, a brace of them, one ham and one cheese. Taking a bite of the ham first I said to Dot, I'm sorry I had to bust up your nap.

Oh, well. It's all in the line of wifely duty.—She folded her hands in back of her head, watching me gobble up the sandwich.

Are my jaws keeping you awake? I said a little later.

No, darling. It's your sex appeal.

You wouldn't kid a guy, would you?

You know I wouldn't. But I do like to see you punish those poor sandwiches. It does me more good than sleep.

The train was speeding on and we lay in the cushioned lullaby feel of the berth with the wheels clicking underneath and now and then the polite squeaking from the vestibule and the faint gusts of sound from the chugging of the locomotive away up ahead, and the wind sucking back along the side of the sleeper. The whistle blew. Outside against the storm window a soft spatter. It went away. Then came again, steadier. Rain, I whispered.

Ted?

Yes?

You don't really mind going to the farm for a little while?

I still don't think it's the best idea in the world.

But what else could we do? Suppose we'd hung around in Detroit till every last cent was gone?

I could've got a tin cup somewhere.

We *had* to get away. There's no work for you in that town, you certainly ought to be convinced by now.

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We should've made tracks for Chi.

On what? Three months ago when I wanted you to go to Chicago you nearly bit my head off. No, you just had to come back to Detroit. Well, you got your Detroit. I *told* you if Studebaker's were laying them off they'd be firing them in Detroit too —didn't I? But you knew better. Now you talk about Chicago, after you've spent just about everything we had looking for work in a place where there isn't any.

Dottie—

Yes, Dottie. Chicago—when it's too late. Suppose we went to Chicago now. Suppose you couldn't get a job right away. We'd be in a nice fix, wouldn't we, not knowing a soul in the place.

I kept quiet.

Suddenly Dot ran her arm around my neck, pulled me close and kissed me hard on the mouth. She put her face up against my chest, hugging me, and I felt a warm wet spot soak through the cloth of my pajama coat there where her face was pressing. Dot! I said. What the? What're you crying for?

Teddy—I didn't mean to talk that way. I'm just upset. Do you forgive me?

Of course I do. If there's anything to forgive.

You know there is. I talked to you like, like a fishwife.—That made me laugh and both of us felt better.—And you won't hold it against me?

Not for a minute. I've forgotten every word already.—And at this point I took her hand, closed it into a fist and rapped the knuckles on my head.—Hear it? Empty. No cross words lodged in there.

Kiss me, darling.

A moment later she said, We won't go to the farm if you don't like the idea. We can take rooms in Philly. Or go up to New York from there. Shall we, darling?

Not on your tintype. I'm crazy to see the farm and meet all the folks.

Teddy, don't be like that.

I didn't mean it that way, hon. The farm's all right with me, so long's we don't get stuck there forever.

We won't, darling. We'll just pay a little visit and then you'll go up to Philadelphia and get a job and send for me and everything'll be lovely again. You won't be sorry. And I really want to take a look at the old homestead and besides mother's pining away for a sight of her angel child. It'll be a vacation. The change'll do us both good.

Sure it will.

And then think of it, we've been married two long years and the folks've never seen you.

I wonder whose loss that is.

And it's only two hours ride from Philly. And didn't you say that's a good city for draftsmen?

The Workshop of the World, I quoted.

Well, then. Don't you think the farm's our best bet all around?

Absolutely. We want farm! We want farm!

Shhh! You'll have the neighbors down on our necks. But you don't mind going to the farm now?

Sweetheart, when we're like this I don't mind anything on earth.

Maybe we should go to sleep.

Maybe we should.

But we didn't, not right away. I lay back with the covers off and I felt great, though my throat ached a little from the strain of whispering, and a catlike purring sleepiness flowed all through me and I knew I'd sleep heavy now and no mistake. The rain rushed against the window with the sucking back along the sleeper of the wind. I pulled on the covers and leaned over Dot to whisper:

Into the night, into the blanket of night,
Into the night rain gods, the night luck gods,
Overland goes the overland passenger train.

Hmmm, she answered sleepily. Then listening to the rhythms of the train I shut my eyes and fell sound asleep.

FRED R. MILLER.

A Prologue

This curve of ploughland, one clean stroke
Defining earth's nature constant to four seasons,
Fixes too forever her simple relationship
With the sky and all systems imaginable there.

This clean red stroke, like a heartbeat of the earth's heart
Felt here under the sunlight's velvet hand,
Draws something simple and perfect as breath—that leaves
No more to be said,
And yet implies what wonders beyond, what breathing cities,
Pasture broad and untainted prairies of air.

This curve—the naked breasts of woman exalted for love,
Cradle both and summit of your superb ambition,
Move not more certainly to that far-flying
Among star-fields above even the wind's excitement,
And exhausted eddying-down to peace.

Lover's eye is hawk's eye, on the whole earth
Spread for him seeing only the point of desire.

And then there is the poet's—
His gaze that like the moonlight rests on all
In level contemplation, making roof and ruin
Treachery scorn and death into silvery syllables
And out of worn fragments a seamless coat.

These I must have: but more.
To see this ploughland curve as a graph of history,
The unregarded sweat that has made it fertile,
Reading between the furrows a desperate appeal
From all whose share in them was bitter as iron,
Hearing the young corn whisper
The wishes of men that have no other voice.

Only then am I able to know the difficult
Birth of our new seed and bear my part of the harvest.

C. DAY LEWIS.

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Washington Notes

Enough Rope for Huey—Hoot Owl and Scrootch Owl—The Lundeen Bill—Planning and Tin Cans

THE NEXT two or three weeks, so administration supporters believe, will be perilous ones for Huey Long. Long now has the nation's ear, they point out, and must either make his Share Our Wealth program comprehensible or lose prestige. He has set himself up as a leader, and if he cannot explain where he is going, it will not be a great while before, like Tom Heflin of ten years ago, he will have moved from the position of the Senate's chief attraction—and that he is nobody will deny—to that of the Senate's chief bore.

Administration partisans say that its supineness in the face of Long's attacks has not been accidental, but is part of a definite plan to encourage Long to kill himself off. Certainly the administration has given Long great scope. For days on end during the work-relief debate, Long was able to pose as having the administration backed against an adobe wall. This effect was heightened by the volunteer radio speech of General Johnson, in which the beleagured Roosevelt troops were seemingly rescued from death and dishonor by the last-act arrival of the United States cavalry. All this, of course, was untrue. Half a dozen of the younger Democratic Senators were aching to share blows and headlines with Long, and were held back only by Roosevelt's admonitions.

This administration strategy has already met with some success. In response to questions asked immediately after his radio reply to Johnson, Long admitted with charming honesty that he had no idea how, once they had been shared, great corporations were to be operated, and that he would have to study that a bit. Such admissions can be fatal. The first rule of demagogy is that you must be infallible, and your program a cure for everything.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that administration supporters are mistaken if they think that Long will shortly go the way of Heflin. Heflin's speeches usually had to do with Pope Pius XI's being concealed in the White House shrubbery, ready to sneak inside and wave the Vatican's flag from its roof. Most Americans either didn't believe Pius XI was in the shrubbery or didn't care. Long is attacking the present administration on the ground that the same forces of big business behind Hoover are now behind Roosevelt: "Hoover was a hoot owl, Roosevelt is a scrootch owl," and millions of Americans are coming to think this is true.

The left opposition to Roosevelt in the House, in contrast to Long, seems the most genuine group of men in Washington. Those from the Northwestern states, in particular, are proud, independent men with an almost reverential attitude toward their duties as legislators. The newspaper tag for the group, the "mavericks," comes from one of its leaders, Representative Maury Maverick of Texas, a newcomer of remarkable social idealism. Maverick, incidentally, is a grandson of the Sam Maverick whose custom of leaving his calves unbranded and therefore indistinguishable from strays, launched the word into everyday speech.

Within the last few days, the "mavericks" have succeeded in voting the Lundeen unemployment-insurance bill out of the Labor Committee. Since the administration leadership of the House has no intention of voluntarily permitting a vote on the bill, Lundeen and his associates are engaged in gathering the necessary 218 names to force a vote by petition. Their chance of success depends largely on what happens to the administration's Wagner-Lewis bill. Despite Roosevelt's inclusion of the Wagner-Lewis bill in the "must" list of legislation he drew up before leaving for his Florida fishing trip, influential Democrats are predicting that it will never pass the Senate. Moreover, Isabella Greenway, who, as a former bridesmaid of Mrs. Roosevelt, has a special status among administration supporters, recently sponsored a move in the House to have the old-age-pension sections of the bill voted upon and passed apart from the rest of it. This is apparently intended, in part, as a gesture of mercy towards House members beset by followers of Dr. Townsend. If the House rank and file once becomes convinced that the administration leaders do not intend to enact the Wagner-Lewis bill, and enact it as a whole, I think it entirely possible that Lundeen will be able to obtain his needed 218 signatures, and that, furthermore, his bill will pass the House.

An issue that is—or ought to be—of deep concern to consumers is hovering around the House lobbies: tin. Several weeks ago, Bernard M. Baruch, testifying before the Military Affairs Committee, pointed out that the world's tin is now controlled, directly and indirectly, by English interests. He urged that the United States accumulate and store a supply for its own use. About the same time, with the collapse of the white-pepper corner in London, a few facts began to dribble out concerning John Roweson. It transpired that Roweson, besides controlling pepper, is the man who engineered the recent rise in tin, that he is a great international, freebooting speculator of the type of Ivar Kreuger and Captain Loewenstein, and that, finally, the English Tory government apparently was afraid to expose and prosecute him. Baruch wanted the United States to hold a supply of tin for war purposes, but of more immediate importance to most Americans is the question of canned foods.

Last summer the N.R.A. Consumers' Advisory Board attempted to find out something about the price of tin cans, and discovered that the cost of tin cans had risen until it was then, on the average, one-fifth of the retail cost of canned foods, and in some cases it was one-half the cost. However, the proportion of tin in a tin can is extremely small, and it is questionable whether the rise in the price of raw tin in any way accounts for the rise in the price of cans. But if it should be true that a speculator sitting in London, to all appearances above laws and governments, can at will add a cent or so to the price of all the canned foods we buy, it would make a great deal of the high-priced planning of the New Deal agencies seem more than slightly silly.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

Professor Beard and the Bankers—Whom Do Senators Represent?—One Sample from Many—"The People"

PROFESSOR Charles A. Beard, who represents an independent bondholders' committee of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad, is at least as respectable as most railroad presidents. As this committee's representative he is pressing a demand that a committee of the United States Senate investigate the subject of banker-control of railroads. Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana has introduced a resolution calling for such an investigation and the matter is now before his committee on Interstate Commerce. When the investigation is ordered—as we hope it will be—perhaps it may not be a bad idea to include an investigation of the activities of some of the members of that committee who tried to prevent this investigation. One may well ask—whom do some of these Senators represent, the bankers or the people of the United States?

But will the committee order the investigation? If you examine the membership of that committee you will have to admit that the "revolution" that is supposed to have taken place in the United States has been a very mild one. It is one of those committees that is likely to give far more of an ear to Mr. John W. Davis than to Professor Beard.

Will the leadership of the Senate refuse to make this investigation? What is it going to do about the charges that Professor Beard has brought against the roads and their bankers; how the bankers have dealt with the government, how they have dealt with the stockholders, how they have dealt with labor?

Here is a sample:

In 1930, the Frisco (St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Company for the benefit for the i-dotters and t-crossers) began closing down shops, laying off men. Before long the shopmen were being laid off as much as twenty-six days in some months. Hard times? Yes, for the men and for the road. But these workers were pitched out into unemployment on the demand of the New York bankers who dominated the road. The president sent letters to the overlords pleading against this order. The road's safety was being imperiled. But the order stood. Why? Because the bankers had decreed that the president must show a profit of $6.41 a share during 1930.

Now for a peep into the shadows behind the curtains that Professor Beard wants to have opened. The Chase National Bank and Dillon, Read and Company were among the banking interests behind the Frisco. The affiliate of the Chase bank was in a pool in the stock of the Frisco in 1930. The pool was managed by Dillon, Read and Company. The affiliate had 37,000 shares of this stock. Dillon, Read and Company later unloaded a large block of Frisco shares on one of their famous investment trusts. What would happen to this stock, asks Professor Beard, if it got a black eye? Was this a good reason for keeping the earnings up to $6.41 a share? What difference did it make that a lot of workers in the shops in the West were thrown out of work and ceased to be purchasers of goods? Is banker management good for the roads? At least should not the government, now that it has poured hundreds of millions into these ramshackle structures, explore this subject? Or can it be that the United States government has been aiding these bankers to fasten their hold on these roads?

Let us follow it further. In time, this Frisco railroad, its stock run down, its treasury empty, came to the end of its journey and had to appeal to the government for funds. By this time one of the directors of the Chase National Bank—one of Mr. Albert Wiggins' old pals—became a member of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Mr. Couch had also been a director of the Frisco. And so when the Frisco, in rags, knocked at the door of the R.F.C., who ushered the wobbly mendicant into the cupboard? Who, bless you, but the good Harvey himself? Well, at least he was there and one of the keepers of the cupboard at the time. The poor road wanted millions. But alas! like Wilkins Micawber, it could give nothing but "its note of hand and bill of exchange." It had no collateral. And under the law adequate security was essential to an R.F.C. loan. So the R.F.C. representatives and the bankers for the road put their heads together and cooked up a little scheme. The road's bankers were Chase National Bank, the Guaranty Trust, Dillon, Read and Company, J. and W. Seligman and Company and Speyer and Company. These gentlemen made a written agreement to reorganize the road, create a new mortgage superior to all others and give this to the government for the loan. On the faith of this the road was given the loan, in advance of the collateral, and in violation of the law. About eighteen months later these banking houses stood in a row, laid their thumbs upon their acquisitive beaks and waggled their prehensile fingers at the R.F.C. They kicked their reorganization plan into the ash-can.

At least this is the story Professor Beard told the Senate Committee. He told them a good deal more, chiefly about the Van Sweringens and the Missouri-Pacific. And altogether he produced a mass of charges so grave that the Committee cannot refuse to order an investigation without writing itself down as the friends of these bankers.

Senator Wheeler, of course, wants this investigation. There are two or three Senators on the Committee who will undoubtedly support it. But the rest look like a pretty hopeless bunch. However—and this is the point I have been leading to—the responsibility for ordering this investigation must not be permitted to rest with the Committee. The New Deal leadership in the Senate cannot dodge it. If this resolution is smothered you will know whom to blame.

The President has gone fishing on Mr. Vincent Astor's yacht. Last week, when he left, "those around Mr. Roosevelt" The New York Times reported, "said that, Congress or no Congress, Mr. Roosevelt likes to break White House routine by travel and also feels it his duty to get about among the people." This is what he has now done. It is reassuring to know that he is now drinking deep drafts of liberal democratic opinion from the people—who are Vincent Astor, Kermit Roosevelt, George St. George, William Rhinelander Stewart and Judge William Kernochan. After all, there is nothing like learning at first hand what the horny-handed sons of toil are thinking.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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On the Labor Front

Mr. Sloan's Philosophy—Collective Bargaining at Chevrolet—Sluggish Majorities versus Lively Minorities

ALONG with their quarterly-dividend checks, the 350,000 stockholders of General Motors recently received a little pamphlet by President Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., entitled "A Statement of General Motors Corporation's Basic Policies Governing Its Relations with Factory Employees." This was first issued to employees last August. Possibly their response was something less than General Motors had hoped for, and the stockholders are now being presented with the surplus copies that were left untouched in storage. In a covering letter Mr. Sloan declares: "It is vital that industrial management assume broader responsibilities toward improving our social structure" and explains that his pamphlet represents "our thinking with respect to . . . industry's 'human relationships.'"

Coming from the head of a large corporation, these broad statements sound rather enlightened and hopeful, but it is unlikely that the stockholders, on reading Mr. Sloan's pamphlet, will become panicky. However great his concern for improving the social structure, there is no evidence that he is ready just yet to hand the corporation over to the workers. For though he states in italics that the employees *"must be given entire freedom"* in collective bargaining and that there must be no discrimination for union activities, he takes special pains to point out that these "basic principles" have a distinctly limited application. Management, it appears, has certain inherent responsibilities and duties that must also be recognized. And "the fact that management subscribes to the principles of collective bargaining in no way absolves management of such inherent duties, nor has management the right to relinquish such responsibilities." Furthermore, says Mr. Sloan:

> It must be made clear that collective bargaining does not imply the assumption by the employee of a voice in those affairs of management which management, by its very nature, must ultimately decide upon its own responsibility. It does not mean collective employer-employee management, and must be limited to employer-employee relationships.

How this conception of collective bargaining works out in practice was recently illustrated at the General Motors plant in Detroit. Following the elections supervised by the Automobile Labor Board, collective-bargaining committees were established to represent the employees of the Chevrolet Motor Car Company (a General Motors subsidiary). The following examples give some idea of the success that these bargaining agencies are achieving.

> 1. A petition signed by sixty-six men in the Heat Treat Department, requesting a raise of 15 percent, was answered by Mr. W. J. Scott, plant manager, as follows: "There will be no group increase in this or any other department. Individual raises have been and will be put through. Any man who is willing and able to do a class of work that pays more, will be transferred as openings arise. Your foreman has been notified to this effect."
>
> 2. Truck drivers, requesting a raise of ten cents per hour, were told by Mr. Scott: "We are paying a very good rate for this work and for the present there will be no group increases."
>
> 3. A petition from upset operators for an increase in day rate to 75 cents an hour was answered by: "Present-day rate we feel is O.K."
>
> 4. To another petition requesting raises for men in Department 74, Mr. Scott replied: "Raises for men have been put through and will be put through when we figure such are in order."

More examples could be cited, but the list would become too monotonous; the answers are invariably of the same tenor. This exchange of correspondence, presumably, is what Mr. Sloan regards as "employer-employee relationships." Certainly it is not collective bargaining. Nor is it likely to become such so long as the present set-up continues. For the bargaining committees have no real unions, no organized strength to back up their demands.

The recent victory of the International Ladies' Garment Workers in unionizing the plant of the L. N. Gross Company of Cleveland provides an interesting footnote to the current debate on "majority" rule. The I.L.G.W.U., it appears, succeeded in winning a collective-bargaining agreement, providing for the usual shop chairman, price committee and grievance committee, though only a minority of the Gross employees were members of the union. During the strike that led to the union agreement all of the Gross employees stayed away from the factory, but it was only the unionized minority that took an active part in the strike. Had this dispute been carried on through the usual labor-board machinery, with the union relying upon an "election" to establish its right to represent the Gross workers, it is entirely probable that it would not have won that right.

The strike tactics of the I.L.G.W.U. seem to have disturbed The Cleveland Press, a Scripps-Howard paper, which declared editorially that since only a minority of the Gross employees were participating in the strike, the union had no moral right to involve the entire shop in conflict. To this argument the I.L.G.W.U. has made a reply that might profitably be studied by other labor organizations. The question of "majority" and "minority," it points out, is not "quite as rigidly simple as it may appear to an outside observer. It is common knowledge that in all strikes, even in general strikes, only an active and virile minority carries the burden of the fight on its shoulders, while the majority usually is content to stay away from the shops. A lively minority is often likely to win where a sluggish majority would fail." Clearly, the Gross strike was no exception to this rule. It was the work of the organized minority, in picketing and other strike activities, that consolidated the union's strength. The strategy of the I.L.G.W.U. leaders offers a refreshing contrast to the complacent attitude so prevalent among many A.F. of L. officials, who seem to think they need do nothing more than sign up a "majority" in order to win the rights of collective bargaining. As many workers have learned during the past two years, a "majority" means nothing unless it is willing to assert its strength—by striking, if that is necessary.

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

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African Negro Art

THE ART of Negro Africa, as it remains to us, is primarily a sculptor's art. Further, at its most characteristic, it is a carver's art in contradistinction to an art of modeling. Possibly its most striking feature is its truth to material. One has a feeling that it is not the carved figure, but the wood through the medium of the figure, that in the creative conception has come to life. The material is never just "so much suitable stuff for this creation." But what seems merely the "articulation of something that already exists in the block" of wood is a rhythmic, architectonic, organically unified articulation that drives the formal themes home with a fugal insistence. Finally, it offers an intensity of conception as well as a formal simplification that is never an impoverishment, probably because it is never undertaken for its own sake, but rather for the stressing of plastic expression.

Today, African Negro sculpture is finally accorded its due recognition among the sculptural traditions of the world. Yet four decades ago what carvings and bronzes had found their way to Europe were regarded merely as curiosities, or, at best, as specimens for ethnographical collections. The possibility of any quality of an artistic nature was not even considered. Even when the younger painters in Paris about 1904 began to interest themselves in Negro productions, it was mainly for qualities they saw in them that they felt were lacking in the work of their own immediate predecessors.

Men like Matisse, Braque, Vlaminck and Derain in the opening years of the century were looking to all sides for a suggestion toward some idiom in which to assert their protest against academicism and impressionism other than in the emasculate decorative tradition of Serusier, Denis and Signac. The expressionistic as well as the more strictly formal sides of primitive art appealed to them as in keeping with formal and expressionistic sides of their so-called "Fauve" work of the same period. Again, Cézanne in analyzing forms into their "cones, cubes, spheres and cylinders" and his thematic reorganizations of these elements, had already cleared the way to an appreciation of some of the basic characteristics of African art. And Picasso soon became as interested in it as the others had before him. One of the consequences of the interest was innumerable pastiches and adaptations of Negro motifs by the younger men. But whether African art actually had a genuine influence on the painting of the day and in any way led to the next important development, cubism, or only answered a taste that had already been formed out of Cézanne's experimentations and Van Gogh's expressionism is extremely difficult to say. In any case, the interest of the painters and sculptors in Paris and that of the Brücke group in Germany gave European taste an opportunity to familiarize itself with African art. And as a consequence, it is today regarded no longer as a mere source of antidotes for the weaknesses of our esthetic expression but admired for its own merits as a sculptural tradition.

And as the point of view changed, and the interest in the picturesque turned toward an interest in subtler sculptural qualities, new phases of the cultures that lay behind these plastic expressions came to light. Since the Middle Ages and earlier, travelers and explorers had recounted tales of kingdoms along the Gulf of Guinea and to the south of the Sahara. Of Ghana, for example, which in the tenth and eleventh centuries was reputed to have extended from Senegal across the bend of the Niger River; of Melle, the successor to Ghana in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and of the Songhai Empire of Gao which rose from the ruins of Melle to see the zenith of its power in the sixteenth century, when it extended from Lake Chad to the Atlantic. News had also been brought back of other powerful empires such as the Haussa States in the north and the Lunda Empire in what is now Belgian Congo, and Yoruba between the Middle Niger and the Gulf of Guinea. Of this latter, the kingdom of which most was known historically—Great-Benin—was the outgrowth, its capital Oedo flourishing on the banks of the Formosa River from before the fifteenth century until its destruction by the British in 1897.

And though of course it was realized that due to the perishability in a tropical climate of the materials employed by the Negro craftsmen—mainly wood—very little of the African work in Europe could have been more than a hundred years old, from discoveries made by Professor Leo Frobenius near Ifa in British Nigeria in 1910 it became clear there need be no longer any doubt of the antiquity of the tradition, and that traditional models had probably been handed down within the tribes from generation to generation. For at Ifa Frobenius found five terra-cotta heads and one in bronze that he felt justified in dating as of the tenth century. All six, though extremely varied in type, bore striking resemblances to certain of the oldest bronze heads from Benin. And in view of the close relations existing between these adjoining kingdoms, it would not be surprising if the Ifa heads had furnished the models for those of Benin.

Today, although the art of the African Negro may not be considered a dead art since it still survives among certain unexploited peoples, it is definitely moribund. It belongs to an age that for the African is passing. What is finest in African art was intimately bound up with religion. The tribal religions of the native African cannot survive the undermining effects of science and impacts of European and American missionary zeal. Further, with the encroachment of Western civilization leisure disappears, and with leisure the work for the pleasure of accomplishment not for commercial ends. Attempts at compromise between Negro culture and European culture have been unfruitful.

But possibly what dooms African art most irrevocably in the face of these invasions of "civilization" from the north and west is the same lack that kept the African native's exquisite sensibility and creative genius from achieving a culture that might be ranked as the other great world cultures—an established critical tradition. It can only be the lack of such a standard that would permit him, with all his capability for an intense and individual realization of form, to deny his heritage for the cheapest of our illusionistic art. Today African Negro sculpture, which as a racial sculptural tradition during the last century has not had a rival for the extent and quality of its production, may be considered a contemporary, yet at the same time a practically extinct, art.

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY.

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Question of Civil Liberties

SIR: Quoting The New Republic [February 27, 1935, p. 62], "partisans of the Russian endeavor do not condemn the Soviets in toto because of specific violations of civil liberty; on the contrary, they are ready to consider questions concerning the possible necessity—though the unwelcome necessity—of such violations in pursuit of the major objectives that they approve." This is an extraordinary statement. It would follow that, if one approved of, say, fascism, one would also consider—with regret—the necessity of suppressing civil liberties in pursuit of that worthy objective. Indeed, the admission of this principle would admit suppressions of civil liberties on the grounds of any and each separate political ideal.

Considering that it is the theme of an editorial article replying to a question about the significance of civil liberties, or absence of such liberties, the statement becomes, on reflection, still more extraordinary. The ultimate conclusion from it is that one set of beliefs, namely our own, are to be set up as a canon, from which all other ideas are then outlawed. It is even permissible—though indeed with regret—to place people who hold these outlawed ideas in concentration camps. . . .

The question raised is one that goes to the root of the fundamental political entity, which is the right of the people to question their government. Your reply is that it depends on whether the government or the questioner is in the right. Thus bias would be the arbiter. There is, I believe, a segment of Communist opinion that holds that all people are necessarily biased, and that one therefore should be biased for communism, that being the only true bias. That this doctrine underlies certain of the essays appearing in The New Republic is as obvious as it appears inappropriate in a journal purporting to convey intelligent opinion. If this is your policy, it is only fair to state it.

Allendale, N. J. HERBERT HARVEY.

[There are three differences between us and Mr. Harvey.

1. Though, like him, we believe in the right of people to question their government, we do not expect that any government will sanction this right at all times and in all circumstances.

2. We do not base our judgment of governments solely on the denial or concession of this right. One government that denies it may be preferable to another that does—or even possibly to another that does not. Governments have important functions aside from the guarantee of civil liberties. If one or more of these functions conflicts with civil liberties, a choice must be made. Has Mr. Harvey never heard of the conflict of rights or of liberties?

3. Mr. Harvey believes that he has no bias. He supposes that we must be Communists because we believe that people are biased. He thinks that intelligent people have no obligation to decide what opinions or policies are right, and that such crude distinctions can be based only on bias, against which he is—we were about to say—biased.—THE EDITORS.]

Dr. Persons Among the Facts

SIR: I agree with you that there is something very queer about Persons' facts as you distort them in your editorial "Dr. Persons Among the Facts" [The New Republic, March 13]. Since it is obvious from your thoroughgoing misstatements that you did not bother to read the report you criticize, I am sending you a copy with my compliments, but with little hope that you will consult it.

My report covers electric bills for specific residential service for over 1,800 plants serving both large and small cities having an aggregate population amounting to 88 percent of all communities in the United States of 2,500 population or over.

You say "We find that Dr. Persons, who confines his observations to larger cities, has picked out private companies whose median average bill is 15 percent below the Federal Power Commission's average." In fact, it is the F.P.C. report, not my report, that covers only the larger cities of 50,000 population or over. My report covers several hundred cities of 50,000 or less as well as all cities of 50,000 or more population. Of the 290 municipal plants and 290 corresponding private plants, to which you refer, less than seven percent are located in cities of 50,000 or over. You have scrambled your comparisons between averages for bills in large and small communities.

If we compare my results for forty kilowatt hours with those of the F.P.C. for forty kilowatt hours for plants in cities of 50,000 or more population in both cases, we get the following:

Median Residential Bills for 40 Kilowatt Hours
(Plants serving cities of 50,000 or over)

	Median Bill
F.P.C. report[1]	$2.32
W.M.P. report[2]	2.52

Contrary to your statement, my averages are higher, not lower, than those of the F.P.C. The explanation is simple:

The rates used in my study are those in effect previous to July 1, 1934, while those of the F.P.C. are the rates in effect on January 1, 1935. During the second half of 1934, according to the F.P.C. report, "sixty cities, or nearly one-third of the 191 communities included in this report, enjoyed reductions in the rates for residential consumers."

It is hardly worth while to pursue further the discussion of an editorial that sets up a straw man and then proceeds to destroy him. I applaud his destruction!

New York City. WARREN M. PERSONS.

[Dr. Persons has given further evidence of a surprising capacity for handling facts and quoted statements in a loose manner.

In the first place, he takes a sentence out of its context and applies the comment to a group of cities to which no reference whatever was made. In the editorial to which he objects, reference was made to his selection for comparison purposes of twenty-four private and twenty-four municipal plants serving large cities. He attempts to refute the sentence quoted by pointing to the fact that he covers in his report several hundred cities, both large and small. No comment whatsoever was made with reference to smaller communities in the editorial, so that there could be no question of "scrambled comparisons between averages for bills in large and small communities." May we take occasion to turn this unwarranted criticism upon Dr. Persons, because in his selection of twenty-four large private plants he limited himself to those of 100,000 and more population while among the twenty-four large municipal plants we find but eight serving cities of 100,000 and above, while seven operate in cities of 50,000 to 100,000, and nine in those below 50,000. If the size of communities means anything in making rate comparisons, it is obvious that the municipals suffered from this comparison, and that our critic did some scrambling on his own account.

Dr. Persons makes something of the point that the Federal Power Commission presents typical bills for January 1, 1935, after rate reductions had been adopted, whereas his report deals with those bills that were in effect previous to July 1, 1934. The fact of the matter is that the Commission report covers bills in effect July 1, 1934, as well as those for January 1, 1935. If he had wished, he might have compared averages for forty kilowatt hours for the same date. What is more, if he had taken the trouble to examine the figures reported, he would have discovered that there were almost no rate reductions between July 1, 1934, and January 1, 1935, in the forty-kilowatt-hour bracket. Even his explanation for the discrepancy noted turns out to be no explanation.

Since we cannot unravel our critic's method of arriving at the comparative charges for the forty-kilowatt-hour bill, we would suggest that he compare the median average charges made by private companies with those made by municipal plants serving

[1] Based on rates in effect on January 1, 1935, private and municipal.

[2] Based on rates in effect on July 1, 1934, private only.

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cities of 50,000 and more. This is merely a reasonable comparison. Using the Rate Survey data, he will find that the median average for private companies is $2.40 and for the municipals, $1.85, a difference of some 30 percent in favor of public plants.

It is peculiarly significant that in Dr. Persons' rebuttal he pays no heed to the editorial criticism concerning his utterly indefensible method of charging *all* taxes to residential consumers who, let it be noted, contribute but 35 percent of all revenues and whose total consumption is approximately 17 percent of all energy sold.

Nor does he give any attention whatsoever, either in his original report or in the above statement, to the propriety of offsetting the tax contributions of private companies, by the contributions to the public by municipally owned companies in the form of direct cash contributions and free electrical service. As this very important factor is almost universally overlooked by those comparing private and municipal charges for electricity, it is appropriate to submit figures derived from official reports concerning the value of these contributions. In the following table contributions of the types mentioned are brought together for the twenty-four municipal plants that figure so largely in Dr. Persons' original report:

Contributions of 24 Municipal Plants to Municipalities Served

Taxes (exclusive of 3% federal tax)	$ 422,397
Cash to general and other funds	4,636,886
Free electrical service	4,078,292
	$9,137,575

(The credit for free service was estimated on the following basis: 4 cents per kwh. for street lighting, 3 cents per kwh. for lighting of buildings, and 1 cent per kwh. for water pumping.)

Electrical operating revenues	$40,500,309
Percentage of contributions	22.5%
Receipts from domestic and residential service	$15,919,579
Percentage of contributions	57.3%

According to Dr. Persons, tax contributions of private companies aggregate 13 percent of gross revenues. This is to be compared to the 22.5 percent noted above. When total taxes are deducted from domestic revenues, he makes a 35-percent deduction. This figure corresponds to 57 percent for the municipals. This sample makes it apparent that contributions to the public by private companies in the form of taxes are more than offset by similar contributions in other forms by public plants. Like other utility economists, Dr. Persons should realize that in emphasizing the tax argument he is using a two-edged sword that may cut both on the downward and the upward swing.—THE EDITORS.]

A Study of Non-Violent Resistance

SIR: In labor conflicts there are many cases where official violence or repression by force have been met with violent resistance; there are also cases where these have been met with non-violent resistance. Examples of attempts to use non-violent resistance are being assembled and studied by a group of students working at Pendle Hill, Wallingford, Pennsylvania, under the guidance of Richard B. Gregg, author of "The Power of Non-Violence." We need the help of people scattered over a wide area. We wish to learn of cases where there has been even a brief effort to meet forcible repression peaceably but not submissively. Under such repression we include injunctions against the right of peaceful picketing during strikes, importation of strikebreakers under police protection, introduction of troops or martial law, exemplary arrests, etc. . . .

Here and there groups that have found themselves intolerably oppressed and the physical odds hopelessly against them have temporarily, as a demonstration or in desperation, tried resisting with their undefended lives. They have massed themselves on railway tracks or voluntarily gone in numbers to jail for breaking injunctions. Unemployed groups on inadequate or degradingly administered relief have undertaken long, exhausting demonstrations in order to press for attention to their plight. Even when these efforts have been conceived and executed without sufficient understanding of the method on the part of the rank and file of the resisters or of their leaders, and without sufficient discipline beforehand, they have sometimes had telling effect. And their effect is not fully known unless we can discover what influence the resistance has had on all the bystander groups: other workers, strikebreakers, bankers of the neighborhood, employers, churches, etc. . . .

We ask that if any of your readers know of cases that illustrate the use of any form of this method they will communicate with us.

Westtown, Pa. MILDRED BINNS YOUNG.

Dangers in the Bankhead Plan

SIR: I was much interested in your paragraph in the issue of March 20, on Senator Bankhead's scheme to have the government take over large amounts of land in the South now in the hands of insurance companies or the Federal Land Banks. He might have added of both land-speculating and "deserving" Democrats. The concluding sentence of your paragraph reads: "Senator Bankhead's bill certainly deserves, at the least, careful consideration." With this suggestion I agree, since even the economic insanity that is masquerading as the New Deal should be scrutinized when the expenditure of a measly $1,000,000,000 for the benefit of land speculators immediately, and possibly others, is involved.

The Chairman of the Committee, Senator Bankhead, held a two-hour hearing and refused me an opportunity to appear. I am not a formidable witness, but I can ask questions and point out facts that do not conduce to the happiness of either sanctified or unsanctified grafters. It is folly to assume that most tenant farmers and sharecroppers can run their own show. Many at least of them can work only under direction, for they are no more qualified—and this is no criticism but a statement of fact—to run their own farms than most factory workers are to run the factories. Out of the frying pan into the fire is not a solution of America's agricultural problem.

Your journal will do a great service in suggesting most careful study of this somewhat apparent effort to have a government evade its responsibility to find a real solution for the agricultural problem. The billion dollars contemplated to be spent for acquiring land is a vast sum. Under an intelligent system of taxation this property could be acquired for not over one-fifth of that amount.

There seems to be some desire for haste, but fortunately some of the Republican members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture are not swallowing this illusion of hope.

BENJAMIN C. MARSH,

Washington, D. C. Executive Secretary, The People's Lobby.

Extracts from Letters

FOR the first time since 1915, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom will meet in Washington, D. C., on May 2. A communication from the League states: "Mrs. Harold L. Ickes, chairman of the committee on arrangements, announces that plans for the celebration include a demonstration by the youth section of the League, honoring the achievements of the founders and forecasting future gains in peace sentiment. . . . The women enlisted in the league believe that the rising tide of fascism in this country and an equally intolerant nationalism the world over, breeding war, must be met swiftly by the exploration of solutions other than conferences in bleak halls and single-hearted faith in Geneva, now haunted with the ghosts of dead hopes. They point out that an estimated 12,000,000 men and women in this country are committed to the cause of peace. And they say baldly, 'Why can't we get good and mad and DO something? We have some ideas.'"

Columbia University, New York City, announces that a ten weeks' study of the Russian language will be offered during the summer session of 1935. Membership in the Russian-language session is open to both men and women but will be limited to thirty students. The work is being offered by the University with the coöperation of the Institute of Pacific Relations as a continuation of the inter-university project that began with the Russian Language Section of the Harvard Summer School of 1934. Further information may be had by writing the Russian Language Section of Columbia University.

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Lefty and Nazi

Till the Day I Die and Waiting for Lefty, by Clifford Odets. Longacre Theatre, March 26, 1935.

THE Group Theatre's production of "Waiting for Lefty" had its due praise some time ago when the special performances were given. Along with this, on the current bill, "Till the Day I Die" helps to fill out the evening. The first of these pieces deals with a taxi strike. There are diverse short scenes where the strikers are shown in the making, life throwing them one way or another toward such a line of action. The second is a picture of Nazis and Communists, with a sort of theme running through it of "he who is not with me is against me." For Communists of a certain pure singleness of nature this theme is as true as it was when Jesus gave expression to it. For average Communists, it can naturally represent only the average degree of truth. Otherwise it represents either (1) autocratic rule, come in or get wiped out, or (2) kill them or they'll kill you. If you are such a person as depends upon his unesthetic opinions for his esthetic judgments, you may, as a red shirt, pronounce Mr. Odets' plays the greatest drama in America; if you are a blue stocking, you can call them the worst. In both cases most of his genuine theatre values will be lost. Meanwhile, any critic with a modicum of brains, any critic, red, pink, blue or even educated (or conversant with history), can thank Mr. Odets and the Group Theatre for something to discuss.

As an active figure, conducive to sweat, clapping and partisanship, Mr. Odets may be in a short time an impressive dramatist. Already, without appearing to be middle-class and stupid, he gives the impression of convictions. And he does not give the impression of grabbing any movement or cause for its stage exploitation and jabber. I still say, I repeat, that, though to a much less degree in "Till the Day I Die" and "Waiting for Lefty" than in "Awake and Sing," he needs to establish the plane, indicate the measure, of his various motivations. Taking any of his situations, there is still room for a more important interpretation. The line of living, after the jungle has been superseded and left, is not so simple as in many of the speeches it may seem to be. To take a good example, we find one of Mr. Odets' characters speaking of an aged Jewish father, a man who has read Spinoza all his life—and look what they have done to him! It would be a more profound art in Mr. Odets—I am one who believes he will come to it (and this review is written for him)—if he showed us this character, too, this Spinoza-read old man. In sum it would better convince us of the motif intended if he created this spiritual aspect against which the material tides of circumstance beat so disastrously. In sum, we should have a greater and more significant range in character creation if we saw two men between whom there is not only the force of capitalism but also of Spinoza. Otherwise, this flinging of spiritual and musical culture into the scales is much too easy. Thrown in like that, Spinoza is, as theatre argument, not much more carrying than to say that the heroine ate spinach all her life and now the factory has spoiled her liver.

Since the earliest beginnings of drama, obviously, the great motifs or abstractions built on have been pretty much the same. Their application, as bases for definite situations or subjects, depends on the dramatist's discovery of what will arouse toward them the most powerful and complete response. On this basis, in "Till the Day I Die," the torturing of the Communist by the Nazis until he will be disgraced and lost, is no more than what happened, very likely, to plenty of aristocrats or bourgeois victims under the changed Russian system. You can like or not like, then, Mr. Odets' partisanships, so long as you remember that (setting aside the special appeal of his causes to this man or that) the test of his work lies in its emotional resources, its dialogue, the response it evokes. The test of his work lies in its theatrical powers and its human emotional powers, both of which are at their zeniths when one of them has been made inseparable from the other.

"Till the Day I Die" appears to lack a particularly clear development. During the final scene there is a definite drop. If the suffering Communist (played well up to this time by Mr. Alexander Kirkland) is to get into that kind of generalized semi-noble speech, we need an emotional plane or, perhaps better, a distinct indication, that he has, through pain and strain, been brought into an exalted and not wholly cogent state of speaking. The play has, nevertheless, many good short scenes, flashes here and there into the situation's progress. The dialogue shows great talent. The instinct for getting the scene forward over the footlights is so great as to be perhaps the chief source of this new playwright's promise. Miss Cheryl Crawford's direction is good.

"Waiting for Lefty" jerks along through resilient little scenes, sometimes remarkably graphic, secure or moving. It gains greatly over "Till The Day I Die" by its nearness and vernacular. The whole tone of it is essentially gay; which is a great compliment to it as theatre; and yet the conviction of grave reality is strong. Creation of character (realistic), if strongly achieved, is in itself so full of satisfaction for us that it rises above mere depression. The vim and sharp eyes and theatre invention of much of this play are such as to bring the whole of it up to theatre delight. And nothing is lost thereby; the progress of a zest for life, combined with a fighting spirit, is, however rousing, prophetic or passionate, not grim. The grim become theatre is very different from theatre turned grim.

The Group, both in play and playing, has fulfilled, in its production this season of three plays by Mr. Odets, no small amount of its early projects or, if you like, promises. Many of the men, especially, play well. Their sincerity of approach is notable. I am, indeed, thankful for the sincerity of their approach and motive; but I still think that for important acting they must go on toward clean drawing and a bit more distance from what they feel, or are coached to seem to feel, about the role enacted. This is good advice. One of the main performances in the evening was by Mr. Russell Collins. In "Waiting for Lefty" he has two roles, both done to perfection and very full of qualities worth studying by most actors. From the standpoint of the rebellious soul (anxious to register with the public, however), such well drawn rightness as Mr. Collins' must be almost offensive. Mr. Elia Kazan, in a corkingly written role of a strike inciter, is a delight, a threat, a wag with fire. His address is sure. His, as it were, eye to the audience is both dramatic and twinkling. STARK YOUNG.

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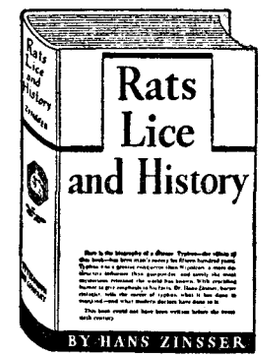

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Spring Book Section

Retreat from Liberalism

THIS IS a book[1] written on the battlefield of European politics by a thinker who refuses to remain hidden in the protected observatories of scholarship. The question of what to think, how to face the present-day situation, is continually intermixed with the more compelling one of what to do. It is the hour of reckoning for political philosophy: sharply defined conceptions of the state have never been subjected to such a pitiless test of literal enforcement. If one wants to see the true face of the Hegelian state one may look at Germany; if one wants to study the unfoldment of Marxian economics in terms of political reality, Russia offers a wide field. A small pile of newspaper clippings can easily take the place of a library; the Aristotelian gamut of possible forms of government is visualized in a newsreel.

Germany, above all, is haunting Harold Laski. Hitler has made manifest the futility of scientific distinctions between state and government, executive and legislative, driving political forces and legal machinery. The democratic nations are scattered on the slopes of the hill where, at the bottom, Hitler stands. The answer to Hitler constitutes the fundamental task of political philosophy in our generation; the invention of barriers in the way of fascism is the immediate need. Laski offers his answer: Hitler represents the last, unavoidable reaction of a decadent capitalism in an era when capitalism cannot stop its own decadence. Through Hitler's experiment the modern state has been conclusively proved a tool of class domination used by those who own the instruments of production. The only possible defense against fascism is radically changing the present economic order and installing the socialist state.

These are very clear propositions, already inserted in the dogma of left-wing socialism all over the world. But when such themes are reinvented and developed by a political scientist of Laski's vigor, their unfoldment brings to light all the underlying vital problems. This unscrupulous, decaying capitalism, which is destroying civilization in order to save itself, is, according to Laski, the focal point of all the evils of the modern state. So the fight that he formerly waged against sovereignty for the greater freedom of groups and individuals is now centered upon what he sees as the heart of the enemy. This is no time for peripheral attacks. Laski retains for the battle some of his polemic tools: he states again that the source of valid law is in the individual conscience, but this abstract term now takes on a sharp partisan meaning, the question of validity becomes a problem of force, the call on conscience becomes a call on proletarians. It must be hard for a pluralist to double the power of the state by adding economic ownership to political sovereignty. But the struggle between democracy and capitalism, Laski asserts, is a fight to a finish, and every sacrifice, however great, should be faced. Even the sacrifice of political democracy, at least for a certain time, may be imperative.

Yet, in spite of the price he is willing to pay, Laski does not seem encouraged by many prospects of victory. Driven by what he considers the unavoidable pressure of events, he passes through positions that not long ago he defended, parts without bitterness from men whom he understands, and reaches the front where the class war is waged according to criteria of Marxian intransigence. The whole way is trodden in a spirit of profound sincerity, almost of sadness. This retreat from liberalism has the character of an objective and unimpassioned autobiography. Hopes are thin, the ruling class is powerful and will not relinquish its position without an unscrupulous fight. The author's only reliance is on the rational and moral capacities of the men of our generation: we can still realize the danger ahead of us, adjust ourselves to the sacrifice that the hour demands, force into the world that greater equality which, Laski says, will make the survival of our civilization possible. Of this courage he gives a valiant example. His voice is still too intimate and subtle to command the obedience of the crowds, but more than in any of his previous books he appeals to reflective individual consciences. His distrust of liberalism, possibly of reason, is implemented by the most reasonable man-to-man persuasion.

The very sympathy one feels with the writer warns one of the dangers that such a position entails. Personal bravery can bring beauty and dignity, but little prospect of change, to a hopeless political situation; a Marxian critique without the invigorating feeling of Marxian necessity gives good food for thought but scanty incitement to action. There are perhaps two ways out from the position that Laski has now taken. The first and most obvious one goes further to the left. The second leads to a thicket of questions and doubts, which must be cleared. Is it really true that Hitler and Mussolini are the chieftains of a decadent capitalism, or are not they rather ruthless adventurers interjecting themselves into a deadlocked social struggle? Is it really true that the ownership of the means of production determines the form and the action of the state, or is it not rather true that the attempt to fight political battles in terms of class war leads to a deadlock and then to Hitler? Is the gloom permeating the whole book appropriate to our generation or is it not rather appropriate to the thorny position of socialism in our days? Are Laski's basic principles really postulates, or are they problems now demanding to be reconsidered in the rebirth that political philosophy, thanks to Mussolini and Hitler, is bound to have in our time?

These are only a few of the vital questions that the book arouses. No other political scientist is giving such a stimulus to the development of political thought as is Harold Laski. No other has a greater capacity to open debates and at the same time to commit himself in a demonstration of responsible thinking by taking a definite stand. This book is the most compelling introduction to the debate of the post-Hitler political philosophy.

MAX ASCOLI.

[1] The State in Theory and Practice, by Harold J. Laski. New York: The Viking Press. 299 pages. $3.

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Fiction and Scripture

Blind Men Crossing a Bridge, by Susan Miles. New York: Frederick A. Stokes and Company. $2.50.

The Pumpkin Coach, by Louis Paul. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

The Grass Grows Green, by Hortense Lion. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

The Time Is Ripe, by Walter Greenwood. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Claudius the God, by Robert Graves. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $3.

NOT EVEN Saturday Evening Post authors are proof against immortal longings. Like their editor, they are terrified of a nonexistent average reader (or the categorical imperative), but they are also in awe of something not themselves, called Literature (or the starry firmament above). They have learned how to be successful—that is, how to be published—but they are also uneasily aware of their duty towards God. Struthers Burt once put the thing in a nutshell when he spoke of writing as one of the "ennobling and directing trades." Few of them are as frank as Mr. Burt in claiming to be the chosen people, but the very worst writer that ever tapped a typewriter has a streak of minor prophet in him, and if it weren't for the categorical imperative of an audience, he would be up Sinai in a jiffy, chiseling out scripture instead of the copy his contract called for. For scripture is really what every writer thinks he ought to be writing, if he were capable of doing his proper job, or didn't have to prostitute his talent for bread and butter. But very few are lucky enough to be paid for writing scripture, like Walter Lippmann. No, in this hard world the ennobling and directing author has to dim his fierce light under bushels of marketable stuff. Such stuff, for example, as novels are made of.

But readers, being human, are so constituted that they are constantly expecting a Messiah, and their indefatigable hopes even look for him between the covers of a book. Contrary to popular impression, they are not only willing but eager for scripture. Think of the pathetic praise that embarrasses the advent of any novel that even verges toward a discussion of the non-facts of life. Most readers have had hangovers often enough to learn better, but like the addicts to more expensive drugs, they are always cudgeling their faith in the next time. Publishers, too. I don't believe that all publishers are conscienceless, cynical pimps. When a book appears with this on its jacket: "Perhaps once in ten years we are confronted by a novel that cannot be judged by ordinary standards"—a little spurt of hope leaps up in even a book reviewer's heart. Why not? You forget, as I dare say even the publisher is human enough to forget, that this kind of thing happens *every ten years;* you say to yourself: Once in ten years! Perhaps the book of the generation! Perhaps. . . .

The book we're talking about is "Blind Men Crossing a Bridge," and alas, alas, it's not the book of the generation. It has the same emotional date as Meredith's poem, "Love in the Valley." But it is the most serious attempt in this lot to make fiction into scripture, which is why I mention it first. It's a long book, over 850 pages, and if "Love in the Valley" still has a hold on you, "Blind Men Crossing a Bridge" will probably get you down. If not, not. The story is about a poet who loved innocence so much he thought a country girl was it. One night on a hayrick, between sleep and waking, he seduced her. They had to get married, but now she was injured innocence and he was guilt. An older woman, to whom he turned, sent him hungry away, and when his wife would have nothing more to do with him, he drowned himself. His daughter grew up to fall in love with a priest, whose accusing conscience finally drove him into an asylum. The scriptural intent of the story may not be apparent from this sketchy recapitulation, but it will be plain enough to the cursory reader. The author's creatures are microcosmic symbols and, confined within their own story, they have, or seem to have, the Law and the Prophets. "Blind Men Crossing a Bridge" is a respectably serious attempt, varying from the hysterical to the tragic, to sublimate prose facts, but it is touched seldom by the shadow of sublimity.

Being American, Mr. Louis Paul is less burdened by scripture's biblical tradition; all he wants to do is write a book about that Great Mother, America. There are immortal longings in him, too; but he takes them out in conversation. "The Pumpkin Coach" is the kind of book that might be described (if I were that kind of reviewer) as "robust and tender; a fitting companion to that immortal work, 'The Good Companions.'" This may give you some idea of it. A young Samoan, a noble savage if there ever was one, lands in San Francisco with a little money, a letter of introduction and an unblemished soul, and gets treated to a lot of detailed information and hearty advice about the U.S.A. (This part might be intensely interesting to readers who are also unblemished young Samoans.) Our hero makes his first bad mistake by getting arrested for swimming naked with a girl; having been beaten up into the bargain, he leaves town and embarks on a series of country-wide adventures, which include hoboing, studying art, working in a hospital, and prizefighting (his blemished culmination). At one point in the story he seeks refuge from a storm in an empty barn. When he takes off his clothes to dry them you feel pretty sure that a girl—*the* girl—is about to appear. It's that kind of a book. It's cheerful, though.

"The Grass Grows Green" needn't detain us long, under either of our categories. As fiction, it can be classed as one of those three-generation novels (in this case, it's German immigrants to America); as scripture, it doesn't add up to more than this sad truth: that history runs in cycles and there are no cycle-cellars. . . . On the other hand, if "The Time Is Ripe" had a little more Isaiah in it and a little less Hogarth-Dickens, it would be a first-rate book. Mr. Greenwood has written the tale of a middle-class snob's bootlicking progress from petty English shopkeeper to the Lord Mayor's throne. It is not simply a satire: most of the many points of his story lie in its background—the starving, driven, bullied and cheated slum-dwellers—against which this knavish comedy is silhouetted.

As we go down the list we're getting further away from scripture all the time, as far as the results show; but according to hypothesis, the temptation toward it still remains. Mr. Graves, for instance, is so well aware of this highest kind of writing that he will modestly have nothing to do with it. You may search "Claudius the God" in vain for anything in the least scriptural. It is a clean, professional job of work, with no unfinished implications in it anywhere. It is also a better book than its predecessor, "I, Claudius." This sequel, which concludes the Claudian story, shows the homely scholar, the unconsidered fool of his family, miraculously plumped down in middle age on the imperial throne, and almost turning the tables on his contemptuous ancestors, on history itself. Mr. Graves's Claudius was a staunch republican in disguise: his whole policy was aimed at restoring the Republic. For a while

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he was good and lucky both: he overcame the wily Herod Agrippa, earned a triumph for his British campaign and won the respect of even the Roman populace. But his wife Messalina was one too many for him. When he discovered her perfidy the fight went out of him; he sank back into a cynical old man's complaisance and let Rome go to hell its own way. Mr. Graves would probably be the last person to claim any divine attributes for this tale. Knowing the difference between scripture and fiction, he has sensibly chosen to write fiction.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

The Kingdom of Shadows

He Sent Forth a Raven, by Elizabeth Madox Roberts. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

MISS Roberts' bent for allegory increases with the confusion of the world. Correspondingly, and this is no faint praise, her work has become more exquisitely patterned; also less rooted, less alive. The spirit hovers intricately over a scarcely remembered earth. Her character-symbols (more than characters, less than people) throb with intense aerial vibrations that are certainly analogous to human passions but are of a different substance, related to them as the beauty of a death mask is to a live man's vigor. The intangibility of these people is not easy to define. They speak of the world, they seem to move in it. They are aware of tobacco fields, of snail tracks around the cellar door, of sheep's diseases, and the horror of war separates them from one another. But they assert themselves with the fluency of ghosts. Their home, we feel, is not in a small town in Kentucky, but in Miss Roberts' prose, so subtle and melodious that to quarrel with her argument seems almost an irreverence.

One explanation of this lifeless quality is Miss Roberts' increasing sense of the unimportance of the external world. Major events, such as the rape of Jocelle by her soldier cousin, are treated sparingly and without direct sensation on the part of the characters, and do not become real until they have coiled and re-coiled in the mind. Remoteness from immediate experience permeates even the character who talks of direct action and the coöperative man. This kind of vision cannot be criticized *per se,* but neither can it offer solutions to economic catastrophes. Miss Roberts' attempt to present such a solution to the aftermath of war leaves us feeling weak and resigned past all hope of recovery.

The trouble is that the kind of people who figure in this book are done for and probably sense it, yet Miss Roberts writes about them as if their spiritual struggles alone qualified them to inherit the earth. Stoner Drake and his family are Kentuckians whose ancestors fought their way over Boone's trail, leaving strong memories, family pride and ownership of land. With this heritage the descendants meet America's entry into the World War. They are angry, outraged, they cannot understand what is happening to them. They cannot see that the best part of the tradition they worship, the power to meet the challenge of their own time, they have not inherited; and Miss Roberts seems to be afflicted in the same way, for she glorifies their clutch of land and memory and their tortured search for ultimate answers. What is mankind, they wonder, what is truth, what is the best part of a man? And because the world is big and the section of it covered by their pride is very small, they are at the mercy of external circumstances to bring them unity of soul. Drake-Noah, angry at the death of his wife, or the wickedness of man, shuts himself in his house-ark and vows never to set foot on God's earth again. And what if the house should burn down, they wonder, what of man in the final conflagration? They question life as if it were a force outside them, God's will perhaps. The War stops and they emerge smiling, secure in a fuzzy dogmatism compounded of belief in Christ and the fellowship of men, echoes of the Russian Revolution, and the retention of the land they own, which tenant farmers cultivate.

Their peace is pitiful. It is pitiful that Miss Roberts should accept it, for in doing so she has renounced the poet's sensitivity to human values. In her past work she has created two characters, Ellen Chesser of "The Time of Man" and Diony of "The Great Meadow," whose philosophy grew out of contact with the earth and who were magnificent as people. The spiritual groping of these two women, without their ability to act, was elaborated in the etherized heroine of "My Heart and My Flesh." In her new novel Miss Roberts has further pursued this tendency to pare away all physical substance. Instead of people she now gives us argument-racks, weak-winged aspirations toward survival. Even the natural beauties that haunt the pages of this book are lost to us without an Ellen Chesser to perceive them.

ELEANOR CLARK.

Bound Nowhere

Waiting for Nothing, by Tom Kromer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

FIVE YEARS ago the author of this book, then twenty-three years old, formerly a teacher in a West Virginia mountain school, started for Kansas to look for work in the wheat fields. There was no work there, there was no work anywhere, and he kept on traveling, returning home, going West to California, making great journeys of thousands of miles on foot or freight trains and in the face of dangers and difficulties whose heroic proportions he does not seem to suspect. His book is a collection of episodes from his wanderings, fragmentary sketches of Asiatic squalor written, at their best, with something of the sharpness and unblinking acceptance of the horrible that characterize Ernest Hemingway's very early stories of the War. It begins with the discovery that he cannot ambush a passerby on a dark street, that he hasn't nerve enough to club an unsuspecting man in order to rob him; it ends in a mission where a stiff in the next bunk is dying while a thousand miserable men around him sleep and groan and the lighted sign outside—Jesus Saves—looms as a sleepless insult.

Terrible and grim as some of the incidents are—and few stories of the War have been more grim than these chapters in which vagrants are beaten by the police or killed under the wheels of trains or set upon by thugs out of their own ranks—the full horror of what the men experience is dwarfed by the more horrible indifference with which their plight is met, the more gruesome smugness that ignores it. For the nameless and speechless figures who cough and rattle and die in the world Kromer presents are far beyond the state of Dahlberg's bottom dogs; they are like the remnants of some defeated army in flight through enemy country, threatened by hostile natives, forever trying to get something to eat, to get out of the rain, to find a place to sleep. In one chapter a stiff watches a girl desert a two-weeks-old baby that she cannot feed; in another the narrator

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describes his relationship with two perverts who give him a place to sleep; in another he tells of a suicide in a flop house. Only one chapter interrupts the steady recital of misery with a note of tenderness and warmth—and it, describing his encounter with a girl who still has a room of her own, and their penny-by-penny struggle to raise enough money for a meal, stands out as a kind of shamefaced idyll of the unemployed.

Yet it is essentially as a document that "Waiting for Nothing" is of value, a document more candid and less squeamish than any of the recent novels dealing with the depression, but at the same time so limited to a single environment, that it seldom suggests the scope and significance of the life it describes. Each experience in it is closed and self-contained; friendships are formed and broken; the trips across country seem to have no variety and to contribute nothing except a kind of scientific knowledge of the proper way to nail a freight. It is only here and there, as in the passages where Kromer described a night ride on a passenger train, or the thousands of men restlessly asleep in a flop house, that the latent poetic qualities of his material show through its barren and repetitious statement—so that we catch a glimpse of a world disordered and in ruins, with millions of nomads and beggars drifting ceaselessly from town to town, with almost as many people walking the highways as ride over them in cars, with thousands crowding the freight trains while the passengers roar across country, empty and on time. "Waiting for Nothing" suggests this world rather than evokes it, and the epic of the unemployed, whose unexpressed tragedies brood over modern writing, still remains to be put into words.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

Blood of the Pioneers

In Time of Peace, by Thomas Boyd. New York: Minton, Balch and Company. $2.50.

"IN TIME OF PEACE" is a posthumous novel. Thomas Boyd died suddenly a few days before its publication. He was thirty-six years old. His literary output consisted of a dozen books about evenly divided between novels and biographies. His first book and the one for which he is best known is "Through the Wheat," a novel which, a dozen years after it appeared, still deserves to be rated as the most authentic picture of the World War as the average American soldier saw and felt it. If he had written no other book than this, Boyd could still claim the honor of being the only American writer to show the War as it was, without retouched high-lights and shadows, empty of even the glamor of sordidness and disillusion, a dull, cruel mummery that even death and suffering could not raise to the plane of tragedy.

It is noteworthy that most of the outstanding American war books were written by men who had served with foreign armies. Dos Passos and Cummings, who served with the French, and Hemingway, who chose the Italians, are examples. Like their heroes, they came in contact with foreign cultures and were reasonably at home in at least one foreign language. Boyd's experience, like himself, was as American as pumpkin pie. He left a small-town high school in Ohio to enlist in the Marine Corps, learned to dig holes, salute officers and bayonet dummies, won a Croix de Guerre in Belleau Wood, was gassed, hospitalized and returned to a land where his ancestors, whose physique and mentality must have been much like his own, had toted squirrel guns with Lewis and Clark and poled flatboats down to the Mississippi.

In the post-war period when most writers of his generation were fleeing to boulevards and ivory towers to escape from their American backgrounds and traditions, Boyd's effort was to sink his roots more deeply into his native soil. He had a strong sense of the continuity of American culture. His knowledge of the literature, history and arts of colonial and pioneer days seemed almost instinctive. It was natural that as subjects for his biographies he should choose figures from his own background, Light Horse Harry Lee, the renegade Simon Girty, Mad Anthony Wayne, who built Fort Defiance on the site of the town where Boyd was born. A few days before his death he had finished the manuscript of a biography of another pioneer in the Ohio Valley, John Fitch, the inventor of the steamboat. In his novels, Boyd stuck equally close to home. "James Drummond" centers about the author's grandfather; and Hicks, the hero of "Through the Wheat," is an objective double of Thomas Boyd himself.

"In Time of Peace" carries on the story of William Hicks from his return from France, through the era of post-war prosperity and into the depression. In his characters Boyd has achieved accurate composite portraits of average Americans living in circumstances and through events that every adult American will recognize for their resemblance to his own experience.

It is difficult to pass on the merits of the book as a novel, not because of any deficiencies of structure or of style, but because it seems apparent that Boyd's aim was not essentially that of a novelist at all. Felicities of invention and expression were of secondary interest. Distortion for artistic effects would have thwarted his purpose. Like his first book, "In Time of Peace" is less a narrative than an honest, clear-sighted document, valuable to the understanding of another great and cruel phenomenon of our times.

Although Boyd himself was an ardent Communist, his book is propaganda only to the extent that any faithful picture of America in the present day must contain an inherent indictment of the system under which we live. Neither Karl Marx nor Communism is mentioned, and none of the characters is made a mouthpiece for the author's convictions. If Hicks arrives finally at a vague comprehension that the force set on crushing out his life is the capitalist system rather than some blind malignant chance, the wonder is less that one man should come to this belief than that millions of other workers should not have traveled the same path.

Boyd did not join the Communist Party until less than a year before his death; but judging from the tendencies of his thought and writings for the past dozen years, there is every reason to accept his statement that he was "always a Communist without knowing it." In Communism he saw—and this was a thesis that he hoped to develop in a book to be entitled "The Aftermath of the American Revolution"—a culmination of the revolutionary spirit and the faith in collective endeavor that he believed to be the dominant characteristics of Americans as a people.

In 1934 Boyd consented to run as Communist candidate for the governorship of Vermont. His was the only name on the slate. It was a tribute to his personality and an evidence of the confidence inspired by his obvious integrity that, despite the difficulty of canvassing a sparsely settled and mountainous region, he did obtain the fifteen hundred signatures required to place the Communist ticket for the first time on the official ballot of the most conservative state in the Union.

RAMON GUTHRIE.

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A Check List of Spring Books

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

LEOPOLD THE UNLOVED, by Ludwig Bauer (Little, Brown, $3.50). A biography of the Belgian king who depopulated the Congo.

FATHERLAND, by Karl Billinger (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50). The day-by-day life of a Communist under Hitler.

R. E. LEE, by Douglas Southall Freeman (Vols. III and IV, Scribner's, $3.75 each). Reviewed on page 255.

FRANCIS THE FIRST, by Francis Hackett (Doubleday, Doran, $3). A complete, carefully written, full-flavored biography.

WAITING FOR NOTHING, by Thomas Kromer (Knopf, $2). Reviewed on page 251.

RESTLESS DAYS, by Lilo Linke (Knopf, $3). The bitter and tender memories of a German exile who was a schoolgirl when the War began.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE, edited by Marvin Lowenthal (Houghton Mifflin, $3.50). A rearrangement of Montaigne's essays and other writings to show his personal development.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS (International, $3.50). The letters of two friends with a prodigious interest in everything that went on in the world.

THE ISLANDMAN, by Tómas O'Crohan (Scribner's, $2.50). An old Irish story teller writes about the life of his people on the Blaskett Islands.

PERSONAL HISTORY, by Vincent Sheean (Doubleday, Doran, $3). An autobiographical approach to world events in the post-war years. Required reading.

FICTION

GRANDSONS, by Louis Adamic (Harpers, $2.50). A violent and unhappy picture of American life, focused on the third generation of an immigrant family.

THE POACHER, by H. E. Bates (Macmillan, $2.50). Reviewed in this issue.

LEAN MEN, by Ralph Bates (Macmillan, $2.50). A long, exciting, but disordered novel about the revolution in Barcelona.

ACT OF DARKNESS, by John Peale Bishop (Scribner's, $2.50). Evokes the memories of a boy who grew up in a Southern town under the shadow of defeat and evil.

A HOUSE DIVIDED, by Pearl S. Buck (John Day, $2.50). The final book in Mrs. Buck's Chinese trilogy, "House of Earth," which was also published this spring in a complete one-volume edition at $3.75.

FOLLOW THE FURIES, by Eleanor Chilton (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.50). The modern tragedy of a girl without direction.

CALL ME ISHMAEL, by Loyd Collins (Dodd, Mead, $2). Men fighting, working and dying on board a rum runner.

PYLON, by William Faulkner (Smith and Haas, $2.50). Reviewed on page 254.

TIME OUT OF MIND, by Rachel Field (Macmillan, $2.50). The chronicle of a proud shipbuilding family on the Maine coast.

CLAUDIUS THE GOD, by Robert Graves (Smith and Haas, $3). Reviewed on page 250.

DON SEGUNDO SOMBRA, by Ricardo Güiraldes (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50). A famous novel from the Argentine; the adventures of a South American Huckleberry Finn.

YOUNG JOSEPH, by Thomas Mann (Knopf, $2.50). The second volume of a Biblical trilogy. (April.)

WEEP NOT FOR THE DEAD, by Michel Matveev (Knopf, 2.50). The story of a Jewish family in flight from the White Russian pogroms of 1919.

CALL IT SLEEP, by Henry Roth (Ballou, $2.50). A new and talented novelist sets down his memories of childhood in the ghetto.

HEAVEN'S MY DESTINATION, by Thornton Wilder (Harpers, $2.50). The Bridge of San Luis Rey becomes the East St. Louis Bridge.

OF TIME AND THE RIVER, by Thomas Wolfe (Scribner's, $3). A 912-page portrait of the American artist as a young man and as a myth of smoke and fury.

POETRY

CHORUS FOR SURVIVAL, by Horace Gregory, (Covici, Friede, $2). A group of lean, eloquent poems invoking a new age.

COLLECTED POEMS: 1929-1933, by C. Day Lewis (Random House, $2.50). Introducing a young English poet whom many critics prefer to Spender and Auden.

PANIC, by Archibald MacLeish (Houghton Mifflin, $2). A play in verse, less tragedy than monody.

SELECTED POEMS, by Marianne Moore (Macmillan, $2.50). The miniature world of our subtlest poet.

DANCE OF FIRE, by Lola Ridge (Smith and Haas, $2). Contains a fine sequence of revolutionary sonnets, "Via Ignis." (April.)

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

NEW PATHWAYS OF SCIENCE, by Sir Arthur Eddington (Macmillan, $3). Modern scientific ideas revealed in a luminous style, rose-tinted with theology.

SCIENCE AND SOCIAL NEEDS, by Julian Huxley (Harpers, $2.50). An account of what science is doing for the world—and a suggestion of why it isn't doing more.

THE ILLUSION OF IMMORTALITY, by Corliss Lamont (Putnam, $3). Mr. Lamont's argument is that mankind as a whole has been sold out to a nonexistent future.

RATS, LICE AND HISTORY, by Hans Zinsser (Little, Brown, $2.75). An informal and highly discursive history of typhus.

HISTORY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

EVERY MAN HIS OWN HISTORIAN, by Carl Becker (Crofts, $2.50). Urbane and sometimes provoking essays by an eminent historian.

THE GREAT WALL CRUMBLES, by Grover Clark (Macmillan, $3). A sympathetic and well informed study of China's history in the light of her present difficulties—and vice versa.

SOVIET JOURNEY, by Louis Fischer (Smith and Haas, $2.50). A sympathetic record by one of the best of the Moscow correspondents.

PROVENCE: From Minstrels to the Machine, by Ford Madox Ford (Lippincott, $3). History, gossip, landscapes, people—a little of everything that Mr. Ford thinks about when he hears the word "Provence."

A HISTORY OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM, by Konrad Heiden (Knopf, $4.50). Hitler's party and its rise to power described in an important book, atrociously translated.

THE STATE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE, by Harold J. Laski (Viking, $3). Reviewed on page 249.

THE CHART OF PLENTY, by Harold Loeb and Associates (Viking, $2.50). A graphic survey of national resources.

PARTNERS IN PLUNDER, by J. B. Matthews and R. E. Shallcross (Covici, Friede, $2.50). This book charges that the ordinary commercial methods of American business are "essentially indistinguishable from the gangster methods of racketeering."

THE ROAD TO WAR: America, 1914-1917, by Walter Millis (Houghton Mifflin, $3.50). Why we fought Germany. (April.)

MUST WE FIGHT IN ASIA? by Nathaniel Peffer (Harpers, $2.50). Mr. Peffer says yes, unless we change our whole direction.

THE AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC GAME, by Drew Pearson and Constantine Brown (Doubleday, Doran, $3). The State Department from the angle of runs, hits and errors.

THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE NEW DEAL, by Benjamin Stolberg and Warren Jay Vinton (Harcourt, Brace, $1). Proof that the N.R.A. makes the rich get richer and the poor get misery.

THE NATURE OF CAPITALIST CRISIS, by John Strachey (Covici, Friede, $3). Marxian theory as applied to the world depression of 1929—.

PRIVILEGED CHARACTERS, by M. R. Werner (McBride, $3.75). A short history of big-time graft since the War.

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Voodoo Dance

THE REAL plot of "Pylon,"[1] if told straightforwardly, would run something like this:

Roger Shumann, the son of an Ohio country doctor, was supposed to study medicine, but his one lively interest was tinkering with engines, and his father bought him a second-hand airplane with the money saved to put him through medical school. He joined a flying circus. In Kansas, he met and carried off Laverne, a girl of fifteen who had been seduced by her brother-in-law. Laverne afterwards fell in love with a parachute jumper named Jack, but without separating from Roger. In California her baby was born, on a parachute unfolded in a hangar. She didn't know who the father was, but Roger and Jack rolled dice and Roger won, so Laverne became Mrs. Shumann. This family of air gypsies wandered over the country, risking their lives on aviation fields and starving in jerkwater hotels. After six years, Laverne was expecting another child. She knew it was Jack's, this time, and Roger also knew, but he was determined to raise money for her confinement at the cost of any danger to himself. At an aviation meet in New Orleans, during Mardi Gras, he flew an old plane in the first day's race and took second prize by cutting closer to the pylons than the other flyers. His plane crashed on the second day. A drunken reporter, who had fallen in love with Laverne, helped him to get another plane, fast and notoriously unsafe. The aviation authorities knew that Roger was likely to be killed, but they allowed him to enter the big race on the principle that the public was entitled to its thrills. When the plane went to pieces in the air, Roger managed to steer the wreckage away from the grandstand and into the lake before he fell. His body was never recovered. Laverne and Jack took the little boy to Shumann's father in Ohio, and then continued their hopeless and hungry wanderings. . . .

This is a plot that fifty novelists might have chosen to treat in fifty different fashions—as a chronicle of the Shumann family, as an American panorama, as a gallery of strange types, as romance, as adventure. Faulkner has found a fashion of his own, but at the cost of forcing the real plot into the background and revealing it only in scattered dialogues. The direct action of his novel is confined to five days during the New Orleans carnival. The principal character, instead of being Roger or Jack or Laverne, is the drunken and sentimental reporter. Many of the episodes are seen through his half-glazed eyes, and are thereby refracted and distorted; the story proceeds in what military historians call "the fog of war." For the rest, the general construction is that of a play rather than of the usual novel. The story moves in two directions as in a tragedy by Racine—that is, toward a future catastrophe and also toward a fuller understanding of the past. The characters are easy to recognize: every time they walk on the stage, the author identifies them by phrases that have the same function as the catch lines or gestures of actors doing character bits. Thus, the reporter is known by his flapping coat, Jiggs the mechanic by his bouncing walk, and Laverne by her "savage mealcolored hair." The action is quick, sharp, condensed; the mood is unified and is sustained by noises offstage—by a loudspeaker reporting the results of the air races, by the shouts and horn-blowing of the Mardi Gras crowds. There is even a Greek chorus of newspaper men to comment on Shumann's death.

[1] Pylon, by William Faulkner. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. $2.50.

And not only is the novel dramatic in structure: it is also a poetic drama, in the sense that Faulkner's style is often closer to verse than it is to prose. This fact is not apparent on a first reading. One is likely to be confused by the way he runs words together—sometimes forming unnatural and illegible combinations like "robin'segg," "pavilionglitter," "electrodeitch"—and by his fashion of omitting commas even where they are needed. But one finds after reading a few paragraphs aloud that his style is extraordinarily resonant, that the accents fall naturally at the ends of phrases and that the pauses for breath recur at regular intervals. Many of his descriptions, even the more prosaic ones, can be broken into verses and printed as songs:

> Above the shuffle and murmur
> of feet in the lobby
> and above the clash and clatter
> of crockery in the restaurant
> the amplified voice still spoke,
> profound and effortless. . . .

I have not changed a word or a punctuation mark, but have merely divided part of a sentence into separate lines at places where the voice instinctively breaks. I might have continued in the same fashion. There are poems like this all through the novel, and their steady pulse-beat ends by having the effect of the tom-tom booming offstage in "Emperor Jones"; it is the stylistic device that Faulkner uses to orchestrate his voodoo dance of human passions.

There is one question that remains to be answered. Why did Faulkner choose this particular plot to dramatize with obvious care and to clothe in lovely rhythms? No matter how much he is interested in barn-storming aviators, they are still not his own people, not the sort of characters he can write about from the inside. Of course one can say that they lead picturesque lives and meet violent deaths, but I suspect that there is some other reason for their hold on him. I suspect that either consciously or unconsciously he reads a symbolic meaning into the lives of people like Roger and Laverne and the parachute jumper.

Consider again the nature of their adventures. They live among machines, and these machines become a symbol of sex transmuted into speed, of sex interfused with danger. The most sensational passage of the novel is a description of two people making love in an airplane high above the ground. Laverne in her daily life is conscienceless; she shares herself between two men, but "it ain't adultery," the reporter says; "you can't anymore imagine the two of them making love than you can two of them airplanes back in the corner of the hangar, coupled." This, however, is exactly what the reporter does imagine; it is one reason for his hopeless and bloodless and impotent devotion to a woman from another world.

And there is another symbol, this time hidden in the character of Roger Shumann. He comes nearer to being a hero than any other character in Faulkner's eight novels. He preserves his integrity in the midst of disorder; he is capable, strong, devoted, ready to sacrifice himself and to protect others even when his plane is crashing. He is also the technician, the type of modern demigod. And he is killed partly by the business men who control the Airport Commission and partly by the interference of a literary weakling. Thus, in two senses "Pylon" becomes a legend of contemporary life. The trouble is that the legend seems to have exerted more emotional power over the author than it exerts over his readers. Perhaps this fact explains the chief defect of what is otherwise an impressive novel—I mean

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the lack of proportion between stimulus and response, the air of unnecessary horror and violence. Reading some parts of "Pylon" is like looking through a window and seeing strangers making fierce silent gestures, without knowing the full cause of their anger or their sorrow.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

R. E. Lee Complete

R. E. Lee, by Douglas Southall Freeman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Vols. III and IV. 1153 pages. $7.50.

THE TWO concluding instalments of Dr. Freeman's four-volume Lee quite fulfill the more than reasonable expectations that he created in us at the second volume. He left us in fine suspense at the close of Chancellorsville. He resumes the story with the reorganization of the Confederate army after that battle; goes minutely into the preparations for the Gettysburg campaign; and brings off the battle in a fashion so masterly that all previous accounts, however full, including that of the Comte de Paris, are now obsolete.

The presentation of Gettysburg is a triumph of combined military criticism and straight-out narrative. For the first time we are allowed to see difficulties that Lee labored under, critical limitations of men and material, in this campaign, that cast an entirely new light around the failure. Freeman does not hesitate to fix the cause of defeat in two related factors—the death of Jackson, a negative and of course unprovable cause, as he knows; and the necessity to reorganize the army into three corps, in place of the larger two corps under Jackson and Longstreet. Even the lower general and field officers were largely new and untried. These changes are traced into all the Confederate failures of coördination in the terrible three days. Dr. Freeman disposes of Longstreet's self-defense; it is a gradual but withering exposure of that remarkable man's conceit to the cold facts. For Longstreet's assertion that Lee's overconfidence brought failure there appears to be no shred of evidence.

Dr. Freeman's narrative method, the device of seeing the action from Lee's position in the enveloping "fog of war," I have previously described, in a review of the first two volumes. The author scores his greatest success with the method at Gettysburg. But even here, in spite of the great interest of a Confederate invasion of the North, in spite of the inherent drama of the movement, the reader needs to know at least the outline of the Federal maneuvers from June 5 up to the battle, and at least the Federal battle tactics by corps, if he is to get the full dramatic value of the mingled ignorance and accurate intuition of Lee's mind throughout the campaign. It is evident that Dr. Freeman has written for a learned few and fortunately won a popular success.

It is only fair to point out, I believe, that the "fog of war" serves admirably to explain the strategy and tactics of constant maneuver, but that it is less successful when, beginning with the Wilderness and going through Petersburg, the two armies are settled down in daily contact. Up through Gettysburg the battles are isolated spectacles. After the Wilderness we have trench warfare, in which knowledge of maneuver counts steadily less, and knowledge of force and supply steadily more. A little obscurity begins to blur the narrative from the Wilderness on, and though it may be ungrateful to indicate its presence, still one's awareness of it heightens the satisfaction one feels in the successes of a method that could not, in the nature of the case, be infallibly good.

Dr. Freeman's high sense of obligation to his material continues unabated in the concluding volumes. The documentation is minute, precise and orderly. And his original disavowal of any interpretative purposes towards the character of Lee still holds. He is consistently descriptive and detailed.

Freeman's "R. E. Lee" is, then, one of the great American biographies on the Victorian model. There is no psychological study in the modern style, no attempt to integrate the character of Lee dramatically, around some critical conflict in the recesses of Lee's mind. In spite of Dr. Freeman's formidable case, I am not convinced that such a conflict was not there. Instead of dramatization, we get toward the end of Volume IV a descriptive analysis of Lee's "traits," a remarkable combination of sharp critical insight and awesome humility: a static portrait that must surely move to his depths every careful reader North and South and everywhere.

Yet the Victorian biography today has an equivocal position. It is likely to be one of two things, but rarely both; this biography is both, but not in a unity. It is documentary on the one hand; it is, in the larger sense, uncritical on the other. (I do not mean that Dr. Freeman glozes Lee's defects: he is shrewdly aware of them.) The Victorian biographer could assume the functional relation of his subject to the society around him, and he could afford not to be consciously interpretative; he was automatically so, simply because his public assumed everything that he assumed. But today it is otherwise; and it is distinctly different in the case of Lee, who lived at two removes from the average American reader. The average American reader is a descendant of the North of Lee's time, and the North of Lee's time was already a generation, in social change, removed from Lee's South.

There is, I hope, no discourtesy to a distinguished writer in presenting another case for another kind of Lee. And I think it should be said that now, as always, unless interpretation is conscious and critical, it is bound to be unconscious and uncritical. For there is always interpretation. We are left to choose whether we shall dominate and control it, and direct it; or be dominated by it into ambiguous views.

If there is a disappointment in the new Lee it lies in the career of the first post-bellum president of Washington College. The equivocal point is simply this: What did Lee mean when he advised all Southerners to forget the war, to forgive the late enemy, and to live in fraternal amity with him? I submit that we shall never know what Lee meant. By implication—the South never having had a real cause—Dr. Freeman seems to know: Lee meant that the South should become a suburb of the North, should go industrial, go modern; which Edmund Ruffin would have called, as early as 1858, going communist. I state it a little beyond Dr. Freeman's explicit sense of it. But if Lee meant anything, surely he was affirming a Christian and moral, and essentially private, and from the political viewpoint (which he never understood), an irresponsible virtue, which interested persons named Grady and Page (W. H.) later quoted for their own purposes. It seems to me that a little interpretation of this difficulty is about due; otherwise we shall let our immediate new-South environment go on interpreting it for us in our sleep. Perhaps Dr. Freeman may yet be persuaded that the ambiguity exists.

ALLEN TATE.

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The Great Adventurers

Unrolling the Map, by Leonard Outhwaite. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 365 pages, illustrated. $3.75.

Death Conquerors, by J. Leslie Mitchell. New York: Simon and Schuster. 370 pages, illustrated. $3.50.

The Search for the Northwest Passage, by Nellis M. Crouse. New York: Columbia University Press. 533 pages, illustrated. $4.

Mungo Park and the Quest of the Niger, by Stephen Gwynn. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 269 pages, illustrated. $3.50.

ONE OF the primary difficulties, for many of us, in the way of understanding to the full the problems of the early explorers, is in the map itself. We read of Ross's and Parry's and Franklin's attempts to discover the Northwest Passage to the Pacific through the island maze that fringes the American Arctic coast; we follow them as, one after the other, they turned aside into the Gulf of Boothia or some other equally deadly cul-de-sac—and all the time, on the very map we use to trace their progress, the right of way, the only way, lies clearly marked before us. All they had to do was to keep straight on, through Barrow Strait into Peel Sound and then, with the passage opening wider before them—well, of course they might have had some trouble with the ice, but still . . . we can hardly resist the impression that if *we* had been there, with our knowledge, the whole problem might have been cleared up in a twinkling.

So it might have been, too, with our knowledge, and it is often difficult to keep constantly in mind the fact that it was these men who gave us that knowledge, who made the map as we see it; that where they traveled the map was always blank before them or, what was worse, distorted in outline by erroneous reports and rumors.

Leonard Outhwaite's "Unrolling the Map," the first of the four books we have to consider here, attacks this difficulty in an ingenious fashion. A history of exploration from the voyages of Hanau, the Egyptian, in 2750 B.C., to the present time, it begins with a map of the world as the Mediterranean peoples knew it thirty centuries before Christ—all dark, save for a few pin-points of light where the Egyptian, Minoan, Assyrian and other early cultures centered. As the account proceeds, the map expands with it; the light creeps around the north coast of Africa, east into Asia, northwestward over Europe. It shrinks again at the advent of the Dark Ages; then, later, thin lines leap out here and there—east again with the Crusaders, west with Columbus and the Spanish adventurers, far south of the Equator with Da Gama and Magellan; and then these lines begin to spread until whole continents are included—until in the end, except for a few dark smudges in Melanesia, South America and elsewhere, and a black skull-cap over either Pole, the whole world lies revealed before us.

The book is open to some objections, mainly due to its brevity as compared with its scope, so that it sometimes reads like a syllabus. But in spite of this, and of the fact also that the author evidently designed his work with the adolescent reader partly in mind, it is a well arranged and comprehensive book to which any adult can refer with interest and profit.

The three other books are of varying merit. Mr. Mitchell's "Earth Conquerors" confers that grandiose title on nine men, from Leif Ericsson to Nansen, and devotes separate biographical studies to each. Unfortunately, the author's idea of exploration is mixed up with romance and derring-do; it finds its expression in a picturesque vocabulary in which such words as "limn" and "mart," "spindrift" and "sun-haze" are frequent; and though his facts are sound enough his interpretation is rarely so. The result is largely a mess.

The remaining two, however, are of a quite different order. The search for the Northwest Passage, begun by the Elizabethans, reached its crisis in the loss of Sir John Franklin's expedition in the middle of the nineteenth century, and its culmination with the truly tremendous massing of men and material for the eight-year search that followed to discover his fate. Though the existence of a navigable passage was determined beyond doubt in the course of that investigation, it was not actually traversed until 1903-6, when Roald Amundsen made it in the "Gjöa."

The whole story is a drama on the large scale, with tragedy as its keynote, and with the processes by which dozens of expeditions, all working independently, unraveled the intricacies of the American Arctic as its most engrossing aspect. Mr. Crouse's book, though it makes no attempt to accent the drama, does not on the other hand conceal it. Copiously documented, particularly with respect to the governmental influences behind the actual work in the field, it offers a sober and painstaking summary of the entire account.

If the story of the Northwest Passage is a study of the coördinated group attack in exploration, the life of Mungo Park represents its opposite, and the account of his two attempts almost single-handed to trace the course of the Niger River through the jungles of Africa will probably stand as the superlative example of individual courage and resolution in attacking the unknown. Quite properly wasting no time on its subject's career apart from exploration—for Park as a youth and Park as a country surgeon seems a different man from the Park who pursued the Niger—Stephen Gwynn's biography focuses its attention almost entirely on the two expeditions. These it describes with exact care, while the author's evident understanding of the peculiar unrelentingness that made so much of Park's character enables him to do much to disprove the many charges of cruelty and intolerance that have been brought against the man, and to present him as a deeply moving figure.

Directly or indirectly, the four books all pose the same unanswered question: what is the controlling impulse of the explorer, what is the reward he seeks? The Freudian explanation had to do with escape, but that has been largely forgotten by now. The current theory is economic, and this, in its broadest sense, I believe is true. The general direction taken by exploration is always determined by the economic interests of the day. It is also true that few men, if any, have ever set out on a voyage of pure exploration—to find out, so to speak, what is beyond where. Always, before that, rumor and popular desires have hypothesized something profitable—a gold mine, a shorter trade route, a continent—beyond that horizon. Finally, it is true that the explorer is always judged by his success or failure according to these standards. The scientist is just as glad to learn definitely that the strait or continent is not there as to learn that it is, but the popular reception of a negative report is quite another matter. Captain James Cook, one of the world's greatest explorers, was blamed all his life for not having discovered a continent that did not exist.

But this, after all, explains only the means by which the impulse is released, not its basis in emotion or its intrinsic rewards. Men went out to search for the Northwest Passage long after all hope of commercial profit from its

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discovery had vanished. Andrée, in his last days alive on the ice, took samples of plankton and detritus, and preserved them to be found with his body years later. Mungo Park went back into the jungle, not with trade routes in mind, but to prove to himself that he could advance a little farther than before. The reward is in personal discipline. The incentive, simply but inescapably, is to *know*, and still more to add to knowledge—in its disinterestedness as abstract as the impulse that governs any other of the sciences.

ROBERT M. COATES.

These Free Hills

Backwoods America, by Charles Morrow Wilson. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 209 pages. $2.50.

NOT FAR from the geographical center of America, raised high above the surrounding prairies, there stands a lost world. No dinosaurs roam its forests, but it is inhabited by creatures almost as strange to our modern world; namely, free men.

Charles Morrow Wilson has written an entertaining book about these people. He calls them "American peasants." Judging by his own account (to say nothing of my own observation) this is an unfortunate choice of words. If there are peasants in Arkansas, they are not living in the Ozark hills. Arable land is found only in small patches, and its occupants have never been turned into sharecroppers by small-town bankers. "Yeoman" is the word that characterizes the Ozark hill-billy; it has just the right flavor.

Mr. Wilson is a native of this easy-going land where talk runs more to anecdote than it does to controversy. He has learned how to tell a story in traditional cracker-barrel fashion; the best way a story can be told. His book provides a rich store of back-country witticisms, tall tales, scandal, and all they do say. Writing of mountain morality, or of the country doctor, or of treasure hunts, or of moonshiners, he never runs short of good local yarns with which to embellish his theme.

It is an idyllic life he pictures: every man his own boss; leisure rather than unemployment; fox hunters who never catch the fox and don't want to; honest liquor makers and candid bootleggers; charitable merchants at the crossroads; in short, homespun anarchy. This is not to say that he is as sugary as Harold Bell Wright and Rose Wilder Lane, who have written fiction about the Ozarks. He touches on some sordid aspects in his chapter, "Peasant Morality," and in two or three other places. Filth and superstition. Incest and bastardy and murder. Poverty and sloth. Rustic bullies who terrorize the countryside with pistol and club. But freedom!—is not freedom enough to shrink these objectionable details into insignificance? Mr. Wilson seems to believe that it is.

Meanwhile, this lost world is being found. Its boundaries are receding before hordes from the outside world. ("Furriners," the Ozarkians call them.) Ozark streams are being damned for power sites. Hard-surfaced highways already hem and cross these free hills. The Federal Land Bank of St. Louis reports today that land values there have risen 87 percent within the last year. It will not be long now till the Ozarks are pulled into pace with the rest of the world.

"Backwoods America" is illustrated with thirty-two full-page photographs by Bayard Wootten. These are so good that they are enough to make any writing man despair.

GEORGE MILBURN.

Dickens in the Dock

The Sentimental Journey: A Life of Charles Dickens, by Hugh Kingsmill. New York: William Morrow and Company. 246 pages. $3.

Dickens, by André Maurois. New York: Harper and Brothers. 206 pages. $2.

HAVING edited a couple of thumping anthologies of "invective and abuse," Mr. Hugh Kingsmill seems now to offer himself as a candidate for inclusion in a third. His attitude toward Dickens is not really reminiscent of Johnson on the Scots or of Swinburne on Whitman: he is less peevish and more cogent than either; but he can be equally quotable and at least equally deadly. "Before he saw America," says Mr. Kingsmill, "he thought of it as the Charles Dickens among the nations, young, free, aspiring, untainted and unshackled by the crimes and stupidities of the aristocratic past." And after quoting G. K. Chesterton's observation that "the man [Dickens] led a mob," he adds: "No doubt, but toward the office of his publishers, not toward the palace of a king."

Needless to say, "The Sentimental Journey" is not a contribution to the literature of Dickensian adulation. Mr. Kingsmill is a Pelagius or a Servetus among the faithful. Acting on the biographical principle that a man is guilty until he is proved innocent, he builds up perhaps the most coherent case yet sustained against Dickens as a man and as an artist. In his view, Charles Dickens was fundamentally an egotist who saw the world mainly through a fog of self-pity; whose early success fatally confirmed an already powerful drive toward self-assertion and power; whose nature was torn between the comic perceptions that were the secret of his genius and the emotionality that was never harmonized with them; whose intellect was impeded in its development by a premature blossoming of his creative powers and remained that of an impressionable youth; who sympathized with the unfortunate solely on the strength of his embittered childhood, and who pled their cause against the great within the safe limits of a soft humanitarianism; and whose fiction, except when his comic genius operates freely, suffers fatally from his emotional and intellectual undevelopment, his incapacity for self-criticism, and his evasiveness.

It is a heavy indictment, and its one-sidedness may be defended as inevitable in effective controversy. But it will modify rather than dictate the ideally reasonable estimate of Dickens. It will do this because the method, a blend of moralistic abuse and cynical psychoanalysis, though telling up to a point, isolates the individual writer in an unreal and fruitless way, and loads his memory with a kind of guilt that must at least be shared by his class and his age. A really fair indictment of Dickens would be a still bitterer indictment of the nineteenth-century British bourgeoisie whose vulgarities, meannesses, and falsities corrupted and sterilized so beautiful a gift as his, and, no doubt along with inner flaws of his own, distracted and at last darkened his career.

M. Maurois' book raises no such questions: indeed, it raises no questions at all. There is doubtless an audience for such books, but it is best known to publishers. The critical level reached is indicated by such sentences as these, in an "evocation" of the England of Dickens's youth: "Work became much harder, and even children were driven to it. We can hardly imagine what the lives of children in those days could sometimes be like." In those days!

NEWTON ARVIN.

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Some Spring Novels

The Black Consul, by Anatolii Vinogradov. New York: The Viking Press. $2.75.

THIS IS a generally interesting novel that is noteworthy for the documentary material incorporated in its story. It deals with the French Revolution and more particularly with the coincident Haitian revolt, the plot following history in a series of episodes that juxtapose well known figures: Bonaparte, Lavoisier, Toussaint, Leclerc, Robespierre, etc. The vignettes of some of these people are delightful, and in contrast to the attitude of the usual story of this period—glory to aristocrats and to hardly anybody else—it is refreshing to come across the pro-revolutionary bias this author shows towards his characters.

So far so good. But is this really an example of a new school of Marxian historical fiction? Far from it. If such a school is to arise and flourish it can only be on the following principles:

> *Basis.*—Truth. A study of original sources. Absolute accuracy is necessary to forestall criticism and to furnish reliable and powerful revolutionary weapons as well.
>
> *Aim.*—The revelation of the hidden but unending class struggle of the ages. Gracchus, Spartacus, the Crusades, the Peasant Wars, colonial expansion—history is replete with magnificent untouched material that the old novelist bent on portraying love triumphant, picturesque adventures or some trivial plot, could not use.
>
> *Form.*—Documentary material, while furnishing the solid substratum of the new historical novel, must not obscure the story. The book must compete with and conquer the older type. The author must not turn historian. He must remain novelist.
>
> *Characters.*—Naturally the future Marxian novelist will choose his protagonist from the ranks of the hitherto ignored lower classes. To a large degree this is virgin territory. The task of depicting these classes realistically should be the major objective of the new novelist whether his field is the past or the present.

Now it is fact that Vinogradov's book is more or less wanting in all these principles. His historical accuracy leaves much to be desired. He completely misrepresents the Haitian revolt, ignores its origin, its peripeties. He certainly does not lay bare the cause of the Voodoo-inspired Haitian Jacquerie that astute men like Toussaint L'Ouverture, Christophe, Dessalines, seized upon to advance their own various aims and purposes. And all this is tied up with the fact that in this novel of hundreds of characters there is scarcely one from the lower classes. Not a single proletarian, not a single slave appears on the scene. Worse still is the manner in which certain quite unhistorical Negro conspirators are depicted: agile as monkeys, with more disguises than Sherlock Holmes, ridiculous with exaggerated romantic attitudes. Beneath the revolutionary gold is visible the brass of the *feuilletoniste*. Fundamental to all this is an insufficient study of the sources, strikingly revealed in a bibliography containing the most surprising errors for one who should be completely familiar with the period he wishes to depict. In short, a faltering step in the direction of the new Dumas, the new Scott, the new Flaubert.

GUY ENDORE.

Voyage in the Dark, by Jean Rhys. New York: William Morrow and Company. $2.

Stars Were Born, by Barbara Lucas. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.

STYLE is a severe and subtle respect for the subject matter—*"Le style, c'est du respect sévère et subtil pour le contenu."* Jean Rhys is perfectly possessed of this deference, and therefore she is one of the finest writers of this time. As her subject matter is simple throughout, so is her style of an effortless simplicity. "Voyage in the Dark" is a variation on a theme, for it is the story she has always told, with only minor differences of circumstance, about a helpless tired creature, the girl "with a spring broken in her somewhere." Like Schnitzler this writer is irradiated with pity for the woman who is victimized by either too much or not enough feeling, or perhaps it is more accurate to say for the woman in whom the very excess of feeling causes an atrophy of itself whenever action, particularly gross action, is required of her. Sometimes one girl is less sensitive than another, in which case Jean Rhys lends her own sensitivity through the work. Each wants no more than warmth and kindness, yet every time "the answer's a lemon."

Anna has been sent to England, where she is on the stage. After the failure of her first connection with a man she drifts blankly into prostitution. The undercurrents of memory run through these dreary experiences, memory of the West Indies of her childhood.

> And I lay there and thought.
>
> —She'll smile and put the tray down and I'll say Francine I've had such an awful dream it was only a dream she'll say and on the tray the blue cup and saucer and the silver teapot so I'd know for certain that it had started again my lovely life like a five-finger exercise played very slowly on the piano like a garden with a high wall around it and every now and again thinking I only dreamt it it never happened—

Barbara Lucas's novel is also concerned with empty young women. It goes lightly and with wit, but, lacking the absolute plausibility of "Voyage in the Dark," it is pathos rather than tragedy.

The sisters Petra and Domenica Harcourt are both stopped short by wanting love where it has not been offered. Petra keeps up the appearance of going on, what with marriage and all, but her whole desire is to stop feeling. When she finds that she can't even be sorry for Domenica any more she is triumphant. She pawns her violin to pay for a vacation alone by the sea, "the last independent big thing she did, except for dying." Domenica is engaging as a young girl, the constant nymph in many particulars, with a family resembling but not so naïve and sprightly as the Sangers. After the catalectic experience she deliberately hardens and deadens her mind and spirit, becoming anybody's mistress and then marrying a rich coarse young Frenchman for a guarantee against being alone. The mother's life is gentler, but an apt shadow of what is happening to the daughters.

It seems impossible that talent is such a secondary spring of action in women that it can so easily be broken. The argument is usually that both talent and sexual love partake of the creative impulse. If these women were conditioned for neuroticism by their unconventional girlhoods then the

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author's conclusion would be well pointed up. Such is not the case. One suspects her of having started with one idea that was no more than charming, and of having finished with another that was serious. Her book is diverting, concocted, and a promise—in its last two pages—that when she will write with a single and intense aim she will write very well indeed. HAZEL HAWTHORNE.

The Poacher, by H. E. Bates. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

BUCK BISHOP was a shoemaker when he felt like it, a harvest hand in season, and a poacher all the time. He had a craftsman's joy in whatever he did, but his passion for life and his love of poaching were one. A wordless harmony existed between him and his son and disciple Luke. When at last a bullet killed him, Luke was at first too dazed to know how to live. Then one day he found the keeper dead in the falling snow which reddened over his breast. Terrified, Luke became a fugitive. When he returned to his birthplace long afterwards, it was to live a new life that had somehow taken possession of him, with a farm and an ambitious wife who taught their children to be ashamed of him. The rest of the story is that of the growing cleavage between his ways and theirs, the ways of a new order he does not understand, which turns the scene of his carefree boyhood into brick and stone, regimenting every hour with Factory and Education Acts and what-will-people-think.

This is the odyssey of a man, a realistic novel firmly knit, creative in character, incident and background, a moving story swiftly and beautifully told. But it is also the story of the individual trapped by the machine, the struggle between two eras, in which Luke's life suggests the lingering beauty, the weakness and defeat of the age that is passing. In its profound sense of nature and man's helplessness, "The Poacher" is a recreation of the Hardy tradition in a form more compact, closer to immediate actualities. It is an extraordinarily concentrated and brilliant performance, worth reading slowly and reading again.
CLARA G. STILLMAN.

Taps at Reveille, by F. Scott Fitzgerald. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

SCOTT FITZGERALD is supposed to be a case of split personality: Fitzgerald A is the serious writer; Fitzgerald B brings home the necessary bacon. And "Taps at Reveille," a collection of avowed pot-boilers, was written with his fingers crossed by Fitzgerald B. There seems to be a feeling abroad that it would be kinder not to take any critical notice of the goings-on of Fitzgerald B, since his better half is such a superior person and might be embarrassed. Mr. Fitzgerald himself, however, obviously doesn't feel that way about it, for he signs his moniker to all and sundry, and even collects the offerings of his lower nature in a book. He is right: there is no real difference in kind between "Taps at Reveille" and "Tender Is the Night"; the creatures whom he has sold down the river for a good price are a little cruder, that's all. The yearning toward maturity is even more noticeable in some of these short stories than it is in his novels. It used to seem awful to Mr. Fitzgerald that youth should have to become manhood; now it seems even more awful that it can't. His heroes have grown older but not riper; in their mid-thirties they are hurt and puzzled children, lost among their contemporary elders, and still longing to grow up.
T. S. MATTHEWS.

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We Are Betrayed, by Vardis Fisher. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, and Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers. $2.50.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Fisher chooses the titles of the successive volumes of his tetralogy ("In Tragic Life," "Passions Spin the Plot") from Meredith's sonnet, it would be a bad guess to assume that the story is written to, or influenced by, a literary thesis. No work could be closer to the raw stuff of personality still bleeding from the wounds of living. Mr. Fisher has undertaken to tell the story of the inner and outer life of his hero, in boyhood in rural Idaho, in adolescence in college at Salt Lake City, and in young manhood at Chicago. Whether he sees Vridar Hunter as God sees him or not, he has written in full sincerity, extenuating nothing.

On the one hand Vridar brought from his underprivileged youth a searing sense of inferiority; on the other, he had the intellectual ambition of a superman. Add to these elements a fierce sexual nature and Puritan suppression, and the scene is set for a tragedy the more haunting because its dimensions are limited. Out of this complex of forces emerges a single resultant—pain. From his first novel, "Toilers of the Hills," Mr. Fisher has shown an extraordinary sense of human suffering. Here in his major work the agony of Vridar Hunter's childhood is exacerbated by pride and passion. The story of Vridar and Neloa, loving and torturing each other, gains nothing of largeness of application; its pathos is in the intensity of its realization. It is the tragedy of the vulgar, the sordid, the pathetically trivial —but it has human dignity in the culmination of the agony of two lives.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Cast Down the Laurel, by Arnold Gingrich. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THIS NOVEL is interesting partly for its story of the master pianist who got so inward that he could neither play concerts nor live quietly like a human being; partly for its experimental quality. Briefly, the idea is a book in three parts, the first consisting of letters and dossiers from an ad-writer to a friend of his—a popular novelist—the ad-writer saying: I wish you'd take these people and this place I knew once and make a novel out of them; the second part is the novelist's novel; and the last section contains a detailed protest by the ad-writer, who says: You muffed it, you made these real people into a lot of easy types—and then reveals his own identity in the story, going on to restore the portraits.

This trick of changing authors in midstream is nothing new (as witness such experiments as "Humphrey Clinker"), but here the subject seems to be raked a little more thoroughly in the cross-fire of two batteries. Every novelist must have a lot of things left over, including a store of doubts, when his last page is finished; and I imagine this opportunity to step in as somebody else and say: Wait, this is all cheap and oversimplified, he couldn't have done this because, etc., would be welcome and perhaps healthy. In "Cast Down the Laurel" Gingrich has made his interior novel shallow enough and sexy enough to leave room at the end for plenty of restatement without much repetition; and the element of controversy, however artificial, brightens things considerably. Really the best part of the book is the fictional treatment of the girl's last appearance on the concert stage, an excellent and sharp piece of fancy. In the letters and dossiers the writing bogs down to some extent; the second part taken by itself comes to very little;

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and the whole book is spotted with the shoddiest stylistic passages: ". . . she clawing back at him with figurative paws, goadingly insinuating that. . . ." "Though destined to an ultimate inevitable rotundity, she was then only plump in the pleasing places." But as a whole it impresses me, looking back over the bad passages and the good, as a study in types of people and in the manner of writing about them that somehow will stick in the memory longer than many better novels.

OTIS FERGUSON.

In a Province, by Laurens van der Post. New York: Coward-McCann. $2.50.

This first novel, an unusually sincere and sensitive piece of writing, memorably pictures a South Africa torn by racial and class struggle, a land in which ancient sacrificial rites are still carried on in native kraals, while black industrial workers in the towns turn to labor unions and communism. These clashes and contrasts are epitomized in the life of Kenon, the dazzled black country boy, who left the security of a known way of life for the harsh servitude of the town and the dregs of an alien civilization, only to be bewildered, debauched and broken. The ruling whites looked on this process with smug approval and resented any threat to their continued exploitation of the natives. There were a few exceptions—Burgess the Communist (who looked for a solution beyond the suffering and wreckage caused by revolt), and van Bredepoel, the humane young Boer, whose shrinking from the violence it entailed made him reject the revolutionary solution. Mr. van der Post's sympathies in the matter are clearly with the individualist van Bredepoel. "If the system perpetuates a color prejudice," the latter says, "we can refuse to admit a color prejudice in our own lives, we can live as if no color prejudice existed. If we are too rich we can counteract our riches by living a simple life and helping the poor. . . . I shall mind my own step." But if Mr. van der Post's book demonstrates anything, it is precisely that in a world ruled by color prejudice and economic injustice, the individual who merely chooses to ignore them lives in a fool's paradise, and is futile and even dangerous to those whom he seeks to help.

MARTHA GRUENING.

No Quarter Given, by Paul Horgan. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Mr. Horgan's style is not quite suited to long novels like this one. About halfway through, its suavity begins to pall, its delicacy becomes thin, and the implications of tragedy dwindle into melancholy musings. The story is primarily that of the brief and brilliant life of Edmund Abbey, a consumptive composer, who wrote music like a genius, and like a genius (if we are to believe in definitions) had a single-mindedness toward his art that allowed little interference. The most interfering influences were his wife, whom he originally married because at first she seemed pleasant enough and had enough money to give him the leisure and surroundings he needed for his work; and an actress, who came to Santa Fé to rest but fell in love with Abbey and was with him until he died. Although the novel is not effective as a whole, it succeeds well in showing the results of emotional situations involving people who are too sophisticated for their own good; and it is filled with amusing portraits of personages of the music world, and of Santa Fé visitors who give plenty of scope to Mr. Horgan's talent for satire.

JERRE MANGIONE.

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